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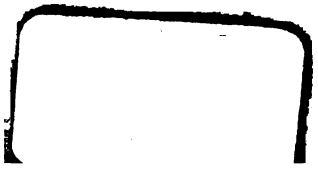

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THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

VOL. VI.

1777–1778

Of this Letter-press Edition
750 Copies have been Printed for Sale

No. 213

G. P. Putnam's Sons

April, 1890

THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY

WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD

VOL. VI.

1777–1778

NEW YORK AND LONDON
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
The Knickerbocker Press
1890

Grad. 4
Vignaud lit.
2-26-1925

Press of
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
New York

Grad. 4
E
302
.W318
A2
1889

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THE WRITINGS OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

CHESTER, 1 August, 1777.[1]

DR SIR,

I have this moment received intelligence by express, that the enemy's fleet yesterday morning about eight o'clock sailed out of the Capes in an eastern course. This surprising event gives me the greatest anxiety, and, unless every possible exertion is made, may be productive of the happiest consequences to the enemy, and the most injurious to us. I have desired General Sullivan's division, and the two brigades that left you last, immediately to return and recross the river, and shall forward on the rest of the army with all the expedition in my power. I have also written to General Clinton requesting him instantly to reinforce you, with as many militia of the State of New York as he can collect; and you are, on receipt of this, to send on an express to Governor Trumbull, urging it upon him to assist you, with as many of the Connecticut militia as he can get together, and without a moment's loss of time.

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[1] A letter to General Greene of this date is written from the City Tavern at Philadelphia. Others are dated from Chester on Delaware, at 9.30 and 10 o'clock P.M.

The importance of preventing Mr. Howe's getting possession of the Highlands by a *coup de main* is infinite to America; and, in the present situation of things, every effort that can be thought of must be used. The probability of his going to the eastward is exceedingly small, and the ill effects that might attend such a step inconsiderable in comparison with those, that would inevitably attend a successful stroke upon the Highlands. Connecticut cannot be in more danger through any channel than this, and every motive of its own interest and the general good demand its utmost endeavors to give you effectual assistance. Governor Trumbull will I trust be sensible of this. I am, &c.[1]

[1] "I had proceeded thus far in order to look out for a proper place to arrange the army, when I received the provoking account that the enemy's fleet left the Capes of Delaware yesterday, and steered eastward again. I shall return again with the utmost expedition to the North River; but as a sudden stroke is certainly intended by this manœuver, I beg you will immediately call in every man of the militia that you possibly can to strengthen the Highland posts. The importance of Fort Montgomery is such, that I wish you to repair immediately to it, if you possibly can, consistent with the duties of the office upon which you have newly entered. A party must be still kept to secure the entrance of the Clove."—*Washington to Governor George Clinton*, 1 August, 1777.

As Washington feared that "if any of the troops enter this city [Philadelphia], it will only tend to debauch them," they were ordered to halt at Germantown, and strict orders given that no officer or soldier was to come into Philadelphia on any account.

On the 3d, word was brought that the fleet was again off the Capes, which produced such uncertainty as to induce Washington to issue the order summarized in the first paragraph of his letter to Governor Trumbull of August 4th.

"With respect to the Tory, who was tried and executed by your order, though his crime was heinous enough to deserve the fate he met with, and though I am convinced you acted in the affair with a good intention, yet I cannot but wish it had not happened. In the first place, it was a matter, that did not come within the jurisdiction of martial law, and therefore the whole proceeding was irregular and illegal, and will have a tendency to excite discontent, jealousy, and murmurs among the people. In the second, if the

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA, 3 August, 1777.

SIR,

Your favor of this date, with its enclosures, is now before me. At the same time that I express my thanks for the high mark of confidence which Congress have been pleased to repose in me by their Resolve, authorizing me to send an Officer to command the northern army, I should wish to be excused from making the appointment. For this many reasons might be mentioned, which, I am persuaded, will occur to Congress upon reflection. The northern department in a great measure has been considered as separate, and more peculiarly under their direction; and the officers commanding there always of their nomination. I have never interfered further than merely to advise, and to give such aids as were in my power, on the requisitions of those officers. The present situation of that department is delicate and critical, and the choice of an officer to the com-

trial could properly have been made by a Court-Martial, as the division you command is only a detachment from the army, and you cannot have been considered as in a separate department, there is none of our articles of war that will justify your inflicting a *capital* punishment, even on a soldier, much less on a citizen. I mention these things for your future government, as what is past cannot be recalled. The temper of the Americans, and the principles on which the present contest turns, will not countenance proceedings of this nature."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Deborre*, 3 August, 1777.

"From the representation made to me respecting Brown & Murphy, I then thought it became necessary to execute one of them by way of example; but as you are of opinion that the necessity is in some degree removed, and from late discoveries that there is a possibility of their not being guilty, you have my free consent to pardon them both, as it is my most sincere wish, that whenever we are guilty of an error in matters of this nature, it may be on the side of mercy and forgiveness."—*Washington to General Sullivan*, 10 August, 1777.

mand may involve very interesting and important consequences.[1]

It is certainly necessary, that a body of militia should be immediately called out to reinforce the northern army. In the conference which your committee honored me with yesterday evening, I mentioned the number which I thought sufficient; But my opinion on this point, and the apportioning them to the different States, I wish to submit to Congress, who can best determine the Quotas that should come from each. I would only observe, that Connecticut and New York are already, and may be again, called on, to afford succors to the army at Peekskill. I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

[1] Congress had resolved on the 1st of August that General Schuyler should repair to head-quarters, and that "General Washington should be directed to order such general officer as he should think proper to repair to the northern department to relieve Major-General Schuyler in his command." It was in consequence of this resolve, that the above letter was written. The day after the resolve was passed, General Washington received a letter from the New England delegates in Congress, as follows:—

"As Congress have authorized your Excellency to send a proper officer to take the command in the northern department, we take the liberty to signify to your Excellency, that, in our opinion, no man will be more likely to restore harmony, order, and discipline, and retrieve our affairs in that quarter than Major-General Gates. He has on experience acquired the confidence, and stands high in the esteem, of the eastern States and troops. With confidence in your wisdom we cheerfully submit it to your Excellency's consideration, and have taken this method to communicate our sentiments, judging it would give you less trouble than a personal application. We are, with great esteem, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servants."

The original of this paper is in the handwriting of Samuel Adams, and is signed by the following names in the order in which they here stand: John Adams, Nathaniel Folsom, Samuel Adams, Henry Marchant, Elbridge Gerry, Eliphalet Dyer, William Williams. An unreasonable prejudice existed against General Schuyler among the people of the New England States, and was so strongly expressed in Congress as to lead to his suspension from command. History has done full justice to the patriotism and activity of Schuyler, of whose efforts Gates reaped the advantage.—*Sparks.*

[2] Read in Congress, August 4th.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

SIR, PHILADELPHIA, 4 August, 1777.

I have been honored with your letter of the 28th ultimo. I confess the conduct of the enemy is distressing beyond measure, and past our comprehension. On Thursday and Friday last their fleet, consisting of two hundred and twenty-eight sail, were beating off the Capes of Delaware, as if they intended to come in. From this circumstance, nobody doubted but that Philadelphia was the immediate object of their expedition, and that they would commence their operations as soon as possible. They have stood out to sea again, but how far, or where they are going, remains to be known. From their entire command of the water they derive immense advantages, and distress us much by harassing and marching our troops from post to post. I wish we could fix on their destination; in such case I should hope we would be prepared to receive them.

I had been advised before that the Northern army had taken post below Fort Edward. I am told by those acquainted with the country, that Fort Edward is not tenable, and that the grounds where the army now is are good and pretty defensible. I hope they will prove so on trial. If Fort Edward was so situated, and the evacuation necessary, though I regret the expense incurred in building the barracks, etc., yet their destruction might be advisable, as otherwise they would have afforded shelter and protection to the enemy. I should be happy, if I could spare the reinforcement of Continental troops which you mention. But it cannot be done. We now feel

sensibly the fatal consequences arising from the deficiency in our regiments, and that languor which has but too generally prevailed throughout the States. If the quota of men exacted from the States were complete, we could, with great ease, check the progress of General Burgoyne, and bid defiance to all their armies. I trust, however, though this is not our condition, and though matters do appear somewhat gloomy at present, that a steady perseverance, and our spirited exertions, will put things right again. It behooves every man to turn out and act with vigor at this juncture. Every motive of self-preservation, of liberty, and happiness, has a claim upon our efforts, and requires our aid. Surely the militia do not mean to be supine spectators of their own and their country's ruin. I cannot entertain so ungenerous a thought, and one so unworthy and derogatory of their former characters.

The panic, I flatter myself, is nearly subsided, and I doubt not but they will give the army every possible assistance. The inquiry you mention will certainly be made, and in the course of a short time, I suppose as soon as circumstances will admit it.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir, &c.

TO GOVERNOR HENRY.

PHILADELPHIA, 4 August, 1777.

SIR,

The great expense and loss of time, which has attended the recruiting service in most of the States, and the little advantage derived from it, has induced

Congress to recommend the executive powers of each, to adopt certain new regulations, for promoting this important and essential business, and for taking it entirely out of the hands of the officers of the army. The resolve on this subject, and the regulations recommended, passed on the 31st ultimo; and will, I presume, be transmitted you by the President.[1]

I will not urge the expediency of carrying this proceeding into immediate execution. I shall only observe, that the necessity is obvious, and that it demands our most active attention. The principal cause of my troubling you at this time is, to request that, after the persons recommended are appointed in your State, you would be pleased to transmit me their names, their places of residence, and those designed for the rendezvous of recruits and deserters. As soon as I am advised upon these subjects, I shall recall all the officers, who are recruiting, and order them forthwith to join their respective corps. Before I conclude, I would beg leave to mention, that the success of this interesting business, in all its parts,

[1] The plan recommended by Congress was, that each State should be divided into districts, and a person be appointed to raise recruits in each district, the whole to be under the direction of the State authorities. Security was to be taken of every such agent for a faithful discharge of his duty; and, as a full compensation for his trouble and expense, he was to receive eight dollars for every able-bodied recruit, that he should enlist for three years, or during the war. The same agent was empowered to take up deserters, and allowed five dollars for every deserter he should secure. The recruits were moreover permitted to join any regiment or company, which they should choose at the time they enlisted, if such regiment or company was not already full, and in that case they might choose any other. General Washington was directed to call in all the Continental officers then absent on the recruiting service, except such as were necessary to receive recruits, and march them to the army.—*Journals*, July 31st.

will depend much upon a judicious choice of those, who are to be employed in it, and that, I think, the districts should not be too large and extensive. I have the honor, &c.[1]

TO THE COUNCIL OF SAFETY OF NEW YORK.

PHILADELPHIA, 4 August, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

I have been duly honored by your several favors of the 25th, 27th, & 30th of July. The misfortune at Ticonderoga has given a very disagreeable turn to our affairs, and has thrown a gloom upon the prospect, which the campaign, previous to that event, afforded. But I am in great hopes, that the ill consequences of it will not continue long to operate, and that the jealousies and alarms, which so sudden and unexpected an event has produced in the minds of the people, both of your State and to the eastward, will soon subside, and give place to the more rational dictates of self-preservation, and a regard to the common good. In fact, the worst effect of that event is, that it has served to produce those distrusts and ap-

[1] This letter was likewise sent as a circular to all the States north of Virginia.

"You will perceive by the enclosed copy of a letter from Congress, that they have destined you to the command of the army in the northern department, and have directed me to order you immediately to repair to that post. I have therefore to desire you will, in pursuance of their intention, proceed to the place of your destination, with all the expedition you can, and take upon you the command of the northern army accordingly. Wishing you success, and that you may speedily be able to restore the face of affairs in that quarter, I am, with great regard, Sir, yours, &c."—*Washington to Major-General Gates*, 4 August, 1777.

prehensions; for, if the matter were coolly and dispassionately considered, there would be nothing found so formidable in Mr. Burgoyne and the force under him, with all his successes, as to countenance the least degree of despondency; and experience would show, that even the moderate exertions of the States, more immediately interested, would be sufficient to check his career, and, perhaps, convert the advantages he has gained into his ruin. But while people continue to view what has happened through the medium of suspicion and fear, there is no saying to what length an enterprising man may push his good fortune. I have the fullest confidence, that no endeavors of the Council will be wanted to bring your State (with the distresses of which I am deeply affected) to every effort it is capable of making in its present mutilated situation; and they may rely upon it, that no means in my power shall be unemployed to coöperate with them, in the danger that presses upon the State, and through it threatens the continent. If I do not give so effectual aid as I could wish to the northern army, it is not for want of inclination, nor from being too little impressed with the importance of doing it. It is because the state of affairs in this quarter will not possibly admit of it. It would be the height of impolicy to weaken ourselves too much here, in order to increase our strength there; and it must certainly be considered more difficult, as well as of greater moment, to control the main army of the enemy, than an inferior and I may say dependent one; for it is pretty obvious, that, if General Howe can be completely kept at bay, and

prevented effecting his principal purposes, the successes of Mr. Burgoyne, whatever they may be, must be partial and temporary.

Nothing that I can do shall be wanting to rouse the eastern States, and excite them to those exertions, which the exigency of our affairs so urgently demands. I lament that they have not yet done more; that so few of their militia have come into the field, and that those few have behaved so inconsistent with the duty they owe their country, at this critical period. But I have nevertheless great reliance upon those States. I know they are capable of powerful efforts, and that their attachment to the cause, notwithstanding they may be a little tardy, will not allow them long to withhold their aid, at a time when their own safety, that of a sister State, and, in a great measure, the safety of the continent call for their greatest zeal and activity.[1] I flatter myself, that the presence of Generals Lincoln and Arnold, in the northern department, will have a happy effect upon them. Those gentlemen possess much of their confidence, particularly the former, than whom there is perhaps no man from the

[1] "Genl Schuyler urges the necessity of further Reinforcements, alleging that he derives no assistance from the militia. Your post is the only one from whence a Reinforcement can immediately be sent; but as I would not wish to weaken you, as the Enemy seem to bend their course again towards you, without consulting you, I desire that you and the general officers would consider the matter fully, and, if you think you can spare Cortlandt's and Livingston's Regiments, that they may be put in readiness to move. I have ordered the heavy Baggage of the army to be thrown over Delaware again, and hold the men in constant readiness to march the moment we receive any accounts of the Enemy. I very much approve of your throwing Redoubts and Obstructions at the entrance of the passes near your posts, as they, with the natural Strength of the Ground, must render the approach of an Enemy extremely difficult without considerable loss."—*Washington to Major-General Putnam*, 7 August, 1777.

State of Massachusetts, who enjoys more universal esteem and popularity; and, in addition to that, they may both be considered as very valuable officers.

You intimate a wish, that some assistance could be drawn from the southern States at this time. But, while things remain in their present posture, and appearances, however illusory they may prove, afford the strongest reason to keep their force at home, to counteract the seeming intentions of General Howe, I could neither ask nor expect them to detach any part of it to the succor of the northern States, which are so well able to defend themselves against the force they now have to oppose.

I hope an exaggerated idea of the enemy's force may have no injurious influence on our measures. There is no circumstance, with which I am acquainted, that induces me to believe General Burgoyne can have more than six or seven thousand men; and, if the force left in Canada is so considerable, as the information you send me makes it, he cannot have even so many. The representations of prisoners and deserters, in this respect, are of little validity. Their knowledge is always very limited, and their intention, particularly the former, is very often bad. Beyond what regards the state of their own respective companies, no attention is due to what they say. The number of regiments, your informant mentions, agrees with other accounts. But in the number of men in each company, he gives the establishment, not I am persuaded the actual state. The British army in Canada last campaign, though they

suffered little by action, must have decreased materially by sickness and other casualties; and if the recruits, both from England and Germany, bore any proportion to those, who have reinforced General Howe, the state of their regiments must be greatly inferior to what your information supposes. Reasoning from analogy, as far as it will apply, I cannot imagine that the British regiments can exceed two hundred and fifty men each, fit for the field, or that the foreign troops can amount to much more than three thousand men.

The appointment of General Clinton to the government of your State is an event that in itself gives me great pleasure, and very much abates the regret I should otherwise feel for the loss of his services in the military line. That gentleman's character is such, as will make him peculiarly useful at the head of your State, in a situation so alarming and interesting, as it at present experiences. For the future, agreeable to your desire, I shall direct my applications to him.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

GERMANTOWN, NEAR PHILADA. 5 August, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,

Your favors of the 21st of June from Westmoreland, and 10th ult. from Fredricksburg, are both to hand. Since General Howe's remove from the Jer-

[1] George Clinton was the first governor under the new Constitution of New York. He was chosen in July, and sworn into office at Kingston on the 30th of that month: and although from this date he exercised the civil functions of his station, yet he continued in active command of the militia of the State till after the defeat of Burgoyne.

seys, the troops under my command have been more harrassed by marching & countermarching, than by any thing that has happened to them in the course of the campaign. After Genl. Howe had imbarked his Troops, the presumption that he woud operate upon the North River, to form a junction with General Burgoyne, was so strong, that I removed from Middle Brook to Morristown, and from Morristown to the Clove, (a narrow pass leading through the Highlands,) about eighteen miles from the river. Indeed, upon some pretty strong presumptive evidence, I threw two divisions over the North River. In this situation we lay till about the 24th ult., when receiving certain information, that the fleet had actually sailed from Sandy Hook, (the outer point of New York Harbor) and the concurring sentiment of every one, (tho I acknowledge my doubts of it were strong,) that Philadelphia was the object, we countermarched and got to Coryell's Ferry on the Delaware, (about thirty-three miles above the city,) on the 27th, where I lay till I received information from Congress, that the enemy were actually at the Capes of Delaware. This brought us in great haste to this place for defence of the city. But in less than twenty-four hours after our arrival, we got accounts of the disappearance of the Fleet on the 31st; since which, nothing having been heard of them, we remain here in a very irksome state of suspense; some imagining that they are gone to the Southward, whilst a majority, (in whose opinion upon this occasion I concur,) are satisfied they are gone to the Eastward. The fatigue,

however, and injury, which men must sustain by long marches in such extreme heat, as we have felt for the last five days, must keep us quiet till we hear something of the destination of the Enemy.

I congratulate you very sincerely on the happy passage of my sister and the rest of your family through the smallpox. Surely the daily instances, which present themselves, of the amazing benefits of inoculation, must make converts of the most rigid opposers, and bring on a repeal of that most impolitic law which restrains it.[1]

Our affairs at the northward have taken a turn not more unfortunate than unexpected. The public papers will convey every information that I can on this subject. To these therefore I shall refer, with this addition, that a public enquiry is ordered into the conduct of the genl officers in that department, which will give them an opportunity of justifying their conduct, or the publick one of making examples. This however will not retrieve the misfortune; for certain it is, that this affair has cast a dark shade upon a very bright prospect, our accounts from that quarter being very gloomy; but some reinforcements being sent up, and some good officers, it is to be hoped the cloud will, in time, dispel.[2] One thing absolutely necessary, is

[1] It is remarkable, that, as late as the year 1769, a law was passed in Virginia prohibiting inoculation for the smallpox, and imposing a penalty of one thousand pounds on any person, who should import or bring into the colony the infectious matter with a purpose of inoculation.—Hening's *Statutes at Large*, vol. viii., p. 371.

[2] "I believe the evacuation of Tyconderoga has dissatisfied the people in general, nor can I say that I have as yet heard any reason which makes such a step appear absolutely necessary to me. However, as a strict inquiry into the conduct of the Commanding officers is soon to take place, the public will no doubt

that all the Gentlemen, in every State, should exert themselves to have their quota of Troops compleated; for, believe me, the whole are most shamefully deficient.

I have from the first been among those few, who never built much upon a French war. I ever did, and still do think, they never meant more than to give us a kind of underhand assistance; that is, to supply us with arms, &c. for our money and trade. This may, indeed, if G. B. has spirit, and strength to resent it, bring on a war; but the declaration, if on either side, must, I am convinced, come from the last mentioned power.

I have taken Col. P. P. Thornton into my family as an extra aid. This, I dare say, his own merit, as well as the great worth of his father, well entitles him to. My love and best wishes are presented to my sister and the rest of your family, and, with sincerest affection, believe and be assured, I am, &c.

P. S. *Aug. 9th.* Being disappointed in sending this letter I have to add that we have no further account of the Enemy's Fleet and therefore concluding that they are gone to the Eastward we have again turned our faces that way and shall move slow till we get some account of it.[1]

be fully satisfied with the determination of this court, who will, I dare say, give the world a full and impartial account of the whole proceeding, and condemn or acquit as matters, upon the fullest examination, will appear to them.—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 5 August, 1777.

[1] "We are yet entirely in the dark as to the destination of the Enemy. The Fleet has neither been seen nor heard of since they left the Capes of Delaware, on this day week. If they had intended back to the Hook, we must have heard of their arrival there long before this time, as the Winds have been constantly fair. As the sickly season has commenced to the southward, and there is no

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, CAMP, NEAR GERMANTOWN, 9 August, 1777.

I have been duly honored with your Letter of yesterday, and with its Enclosures. I shall pay attention to the Resolves transmitted; and, as soon as circumstances admit, shall propose to Genl Howe an exchange between Lt-Colo Campbell and the Hessian field-officers, and a like number of ours, of equal rank in his Hands.[1] I would beg leave to lay before Congress a copy of a Report made by a board of Genl officers, held on the 7th instt, to consult of several matters respecting the army. In the course of their deliberation they took into consideration the subject reported. I shall only add, that this matter has been long complained of by the officers, and the more so as the Indulgence they pray could not nor

capital object there, I cannot conceive that they are gone that way. I can therefore only conclude, that they intend to go round Long Island into the Sound, or still farther eastward. If they do either of these, it must be upon a plan of co-operating with Genl Burgoyne, who, as matters are going on, will find little difficulty of penetrating to Albany; for by the last accounts our army had fallen down to Saratoga."—*Washington to Major-General Putnam*, 7 August, 1777.

[1] Congress decided that General Prescott, lately captured by Colonel Barton, should be retained as a pledge for the good treatment and release of General Lee, and, as nearly as circumstances would admit, receive the same usage. General Washington was also authorized to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, upon such terms as he should judge expedient, without regard to the previous resolutions of Congress respecting Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers.

The question of General Arnold's rank was brought before Congress, on the 9th of August, and a majority voted against his being restored. Party considerations seem to have mingled in the affair. Seven States were in the negative and four in the affirmative, the latter being New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Georgia. This was the first occasion on which the yeas and nays were entered in the journals of the old Congress. It was often done afterwards, and by the rules of the House it could at any time be required by a single member.—*MS. Letter of James Lovell*, August 11th.

can be ever attended with the least possible injury to the public, and is what I believe is allowed in most armies. Congress, I am persuaded, will give it their attention, and, if no good objections of a public nature appear against the measure, will grant what the officers wish and the Board have recommended.

I perceive by the Resolves of the 30th Ulto. & 1st Inst. for recalling Genls Schuyler and St. Clair, that they are directed to repair to Head-qu'rs. I also find that a committee had been resolved on, to digest a mode for inquiring into the Reasons for evacuating Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, and into the conduct of the Genl. officers in the northern department at the time of the evacuation. As these gentn. have received the Letter upon this Subject by this time, and will probably be down in the course of a few days, I shall be glad to be informed what I am to do with 'em when they arrive. I may be then at a great distance from this, and, in such case, should be at a loss what to say, or how to conduct myself respecting them, without receiving some directions, which I request to be favored with by the earliest opportunity. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEADQUARTERS, CAMP, NEAR GERMAN TOWN,
10 August, 1777.

SIR:

The disappearance of the enemy's fleet for so many days rendering it rather improbable, that they will again return, I have thought it adviseable to remove

the army back to Coryell's where it will be near enough to succor Philadelphia, should the enemy contrary to appearances still make that the object of their next operations, and will be so much the more conveniently situated to proceed to the Northward, should the event of the present ambiguous and perplexing situation of things call them that way. I was the more inclined to this step, as the nearness of the army to the city, beside other disadvantages, afforded a temptation both to officers and men to indulge themselves in licenses inconsistent with discipline and order, and consequently of a very injurious tendency.[1]

But before my departure, I esteem it my duty to communicate to Congress the result of my examination into the nature of the River defence proper to be adopted according to the means in our possession, to prevent the success of any attempt upon Philadelphia by water.—I therefore beg leave to lay before Congress what appears to me most eligible, considering all circumstances, and comparing my own observations, with the different opinions of the Gentlemen, whom I consulted on the occasion.

It is generally a well founded maxim, that we ought to endeavor to reduce our defence as much as possible to a certainty, by collecting our strength and making all our preparations at one point, rather than

[1] "You will take every possible care in your power, as well in your march as during your stay at that place [Maidenhead], to restrain every species of licentiousness in the soldiery, and to prevent them doing the least injury to the inhabitants or their property, as nothing can be more disserviceable to our cause, or more unworthy of the characters we profess—to say nothing of the injustice of the measure."—*Washington to Col. Morgan*, 9 August, 1777.

to risk its being weak and ineffectual every where, by dividing our attention and force to different objects. In doing this, we may disable ourselves from acting with sufficient vigor any where, and a misfortune in one place may pave the way for a similar one in another. In our circumstances, we have neither men, cannon, nor any thing else to spare, and perhaps cannot with propriety hazard them on objects which being attended with the greatest success we can promise ourselves, can be productive of only partial and indicisive advantages, and which may possibly fail of the end proposed, may have some serious ill-consequences, and must at all events have some disadvantages.

It is then to be considered, where our defence can be most effectually made,—whether at Billingsport, or at Fort Island.

It appears to me, that the last deserves greatly the preference. Billingsport has but one row of Chevaux de frize, Fort Island has three; and in addition to them, a boom and another Chevaux de frize, ready to be sunk in the channel, on the approach of the enemy; of course the obstructions in this respect are four times as great at the one as at the other. The Gallies and floating batteries, that could be brought for the defence of the chevaux de frize at Billingsport, would be unable to maintain their station, when once the enemy were in possession of the commanding ground on the Jersey side, to which they would be entirely exposed, and notwithstanding the works raising there, even supposing them complete, the strong-

est advocates for making our defence in this place do not pretend, that that event can be protracted more than fifteen or twenty days at most, at the end of which time, we should be obliged with the loss of our cannon at least to abandon the defence, and leave it in the power of the enemy to remove or destroy the chevaux de frize at pleasure. Nor is it by any means certain that a single row of chevaux de frize would be an impenetrable barrier to the enemy's ships. Experiments have been made that lead to a contrary supposition, and if they should hazard one, which it might be well worth their while to do, with some of their less valuable ships, under favor of a leading breeze and tide, and should succeed in it,—the consequence might be the loss of our gallies and floating batteries, which I apprehend might be intercepted, and with the assistance of their gallies and small armed vessels taken, and this would greatly weaken the opposition we might otherwise give at Fort Island, and tend powerfully to render it abortive. But if they should not attempt this, contenting themselves with safer though slower operations, I have already observed, that it is agreed, on all hands, in fifteen or twenty days they would be able to possess themselves of infallible means of frustrating our opposition there, by the capture of our works; and if we add to this, that it might very possibly happen in less time,—if from no other cause,—yet from the garrison being intimidated, by a consciousness of its own inferiority and inability to support itself against a so much superior force of numbers,—which might occasion a conduct

destructive to itself—there will remain no sufficient reasons to justify the making this the principal point of defence.

At Fort Island the boom and chevaux de frize are an ample security against any forcible impression of the enemy's ships which it would be imprudent in them to attempt. On the Jersey side the situation of the ground is such, that the gallies, floating batteries and forts employed in the defence of the obstructions would have little to fear from any batteries erected there. Red-bank seems, by its elevation to be the only advantageous spot for annoying them; but as it is computed to be above 1900 yards from Fort Island, the distance is rather too great to allow any battery raised there to act with so much effect as to be able to silence our fire. On this side, the ground by dykes and sluices may be laid under water to so considerable an extent as to leave no danger of our River force being annoyed from thence; for which purpose suitable precautions ought, at once, to be made, against it may be necessary to carry them into effect.

But, though a battery upon Red-bank, would not in my apprehension, be able to prevent the efficacy of our defence or give any material disturbance to Fort Island, in particular, yet it might serve to make the situation of some of our gallies rather uneasy; and this perhaps makes it worth while to pre-occupy it in order to keep it out of the enemy's hands, erecting a small but strong work there capable of containing about two hundred men, with six or eight pieces of light cannon, and a proportionable quantity of stores.

As the approaches to it are difficult on account of the adjacent creeks, and a communication can be kept open between it and our army, by which means the garrison might receive succors from time to time, though we could not expect to make it impregnable, yet we should have a prospect of holding it much longer than we could the work at Billingsport.

In the position, which from my present view of it, I should think it best for our army to take, the left wing of it would be nearly opposite to Red-bank, and therefore in a condition to relieve and support it; whereas Billingsport being more remote from the probable position of the army, and detached from any other work, could not easily derive any assistance from without and must rely wholly upon its own strength.

Either at Billingsport or at Fort Island, I believe there is not much to be apprehended from the fire of the enemy's ships unaided by land batteries; For as by the information of those who ought to be acquainted with the fact, not more than three ships can act abreast at a time at either place, and as the gallies, not requiring the same depth of water, can extend themselves at pleasure, and besides carry a superior weight of metal to that which frigates commonly have, a much superior fire could be opposed to them than any they could bring, and from the difference of size and make between the frigates and gallies, to much better effect than theirs. The comparative extent of the River at Billingsport and at Fort Island has been assigned as a motive of prefer-

ence to the former, the river being narrower there than at the latter, and supposed to admit of fewer ships operating at a time; but as it is asserted by the gentlemen in the River department, that the sand banks and shallowness of the River in most places near Fort Island, compensate for the width of it and make it impossible for more than three ships to act together at a time, this reason of preferring the position at Billingsport seems to have no foundation. And if we consider, that our whole force of gallies and floating batteries, would be collected at Fort Island, assisted by the fort itself and that it would not be safe to trust them all out for the defence of Billingsport, for fear of the disaster already suggested, it seems evident enough that this is the place where our defence may be most successfully made.

One of the most weighty considerations with me is, that our Army as before intimated, could more conveniently co-operate with the defence by water here than at Billingsport. The ground on this side is better situated here than at the other place, and the Army being so much nearer the city, it is so much the less likely, that the enemy should be able, by a circuitous rout to fall into the rear of it and separate it from the city, which is a circumstance that ought carefully to be attended to.

Some Gentlemen are of opinion that our principal dependence ought to be upon Fort Island and its appendages; but at the same time, that we should make a part of our defence at Billingsport proposing for that purpose that the works there should be con-

tinued on the new contracted scale to be garrisoned by four or five hundred men. The reasons for this are—that it would serve to delay the enemy and give our army time to come up, should it be at any distance and that it would prevent those disagreeable impressions which never fail to accompany the abandoning works that have been once raised and plans that have been once in execution; especially when the persons concerned in the defence of them repose a degree of confidence in them;—which is said to be the case in the present instance. But these reasons may perhaps not be so conclusive as 'tis imagined;—for 'tis a question whether, if our army was so remote as to make such a delay necessary, the enemy would embarass themselves with removing the water obstructions in the first place, but would not rather debark and make a rapid march by land; possessing themselves of the city and of those positions which would make the surrender of the gallies, &c., in some sort a natural consequence; and it is worthy of consideration, whether the abandoning the works begun at this time, which will probably allow some leisure for any disagreeable impressions it might make to be effaced, will not be less injurious than the abandoning them hereafter when they have cost more expence, time and labor, and in the critical moment of an attack, when every misfortune, and the loss of the most inconsiderable post is too apt to have a much worse influence on the mind than the real importance of it will justify. Add to this the possibility that the garrison dismayed at the approach of numbers so superior to their own,

might not answer the end expected from them, and might even be lost by their timidity—the certainty of losing the cannon after the time limited for the defence and thereby weakening that of the upper position—the chance of losing the gallies and floating batteries, requisite for covering the chevaux de frize, by a hazardous and successful attempt to break through them, and the garrison with them, which would fall of course upon such an event,—It is however, submitted to Congress to ballance the advantages and disadvantages and determine accordingly. I would only beg leave to give it clearly as my opinion, that our principal dependence ought to be upon Fort Island and the obstructions there, and that Billingsport ought not by any means to be defended, more than as a secondary object.

And to that end, I would recommend that the works on Fort Island, which on their present construction are, by no means calculated for the defence of the Chevaux de frize be immediately altered and adapted to that purpose, taking care, at the same time, to make them defensible with a small number of men against any sudden attempt to land in boats and carry them by assault.—But whatever scheme is pursued, I could wish the greatest diligence and despatch may be used in bringing it to maturity; for though the danger which lately threatened seems to have subsided, there is no knowing how soon it may return and certainly it will be prudent to do every thing in our power to be prepared for it, as we can lose nothing by being so, and may lose a great deal

by neglecting to improve the interval of leisure they have given us should it be their intention to revisit this quarter. As the means to this—it will be necessary to furnish Mr. Coudray to whom the Superintendency of those works is intrusted, with a competent number of workmen, tools, and what other things he may want to enable him to carry them on with propriety, ease and expedition.

On the whole I am of opinion that the obstructions in the River, with the help of gallies, floating batteries, and with tolerable industry to put the land works in a proper state, will be extremely formidable to the enemy and authorise a reasonable expectation of their being effectual. The fire ships also will contribute to this end, for though there are many obstacles that render their success precarious, and a happy concurrence of circumstances is necessary towards it, any of which failing may disappoint the project, and there is therefore no room to be sanguine, yet there is some probability of its succeeding and they will be at least an embarassment and terror to the enemy, and will oblige them to use precautions inconvenient to them and serviceable to us.

As an accurate knowledge of the country is essential to a good defence and as the enemy's approach may be sudden and we may be called to act, without having time, when it happens, to examine it sufficiently if it is not done beforehand, it would answer a valuable purpose to have it immediately carefully reconnoitred, and sketches taken of all the landing places, great roads and bye-paths, In camping grounds,

heights, rivers, creeks, morasses, and every thing that it can be of any importance to know.

Marcus Hook seems to be the most advanced place at which it is conjectured the enemy will land, the survey should therefore comprehend all the country between that & Philia.

Mr. Du Coudray has offered his services with his Engineers to do this business, if authorized by Congress, only requiring that they be supplied with horses and a hand or two. If Congress approve of it, I shall be glad they may be desired to enter upon it, without loss of time. I have the honor, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

CAMP, IN BUCKS COUNTY, 11 August, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I recd yours of the 8th instant at this place. I was upon the march with the Army to recross the Delaware, upon a supposition that the Fleet had certainly gone to the eastward; but I was last night overtaken by an Express from Philadelphia, with an account

[1] Read in Congress, August 11th. "Referred to the Board of War, who are directed to carry the General's plan of defence into execution with all possible despatch."

"Philadelphia is the American Diana, she must be preserved at all events. There is great attention paid to this city; it is true it is one of the finest upon the continent, but in my opinion is an object of far less importance than the North River. Our position in the Jerseys was calculated to cover the North River and Philadelphia, and afford protection to the State of New Jersey; but the cry was so great for the salvation of Philadelphia that the General was prevailed upon to leave Coryell's Ferry, contrary to his judgment, and march down to the city, and I expect to have our labors for our pains. We are now within about twenty miles of the city and waiting to get better information."—*General Greene to General Varnum*, 14 August, 1777.

that they had been seen on the 7th instant off Sinepuxent Inlet, about sixteen Leagues to the southward of the Capes of Delaware. Upon this I have halted for further intelligence. Under the present Situation of Affairs I can give you no better direction, than to remain at your post and collect all the force, that you possibly can. The Season of the Year is, to be sure, inconvenient for the militia to be out; but the necessity of the case requires that as many as possibly can, must be retained in service; for if Genl Burgoyne persists in his advance upon our northern army, we must afford them support, or suffer him to make himself master of all the Country above.

My last letter to you directed you to consider well, whether you could spare the two New York Regiments to Genl Schuyler's army. If Genl Clinton is left upon York Island with the number of men you mention, it is undoubtedly for some other Reason, than merely to keep the post. It is probably to attack you below, while Burgoyne comes down upon you. It is a matter of great consequence to ascertain that fact. Deserters and people of that class always speak of numbers from report; indeed scarce any person can form a judgment, except they see the troops paraded and can count their divisions. But if you can by any means obtain a list of the Regiments left upon the Island, we can compute the number of men within a few hundreds, over or under. I beg you will use every method to come at a knowledge of this. Let your Spies also be very particular in their inquiry, whether Genl Clinton is actually upon the

Island, for an officer of his rank and military estimation would scarcely be left to keep garrison only.[1]

It has been reported, that there was a collection of Wagons and Horses making at Kingsbridge; if so, it can be for no purpose but to move out; and this therefore, is another fact of which you should endeavour to know the truth. Till you are fully satisfied in the above particulars, I think you should upon no account keep any more than light parties down towards Kings Bridge; for if there is any design against your post from that Quarter, they might by a sudden embarkation, and a favorable Wind, get between you and the mountains, should you fall down with any considerable Body. I am glad to hear that Govr Clinton has determined to resume the command of Fort Montgomery, for there cannot be a properer man upon every account. I am, &c.[2]

[1] The British General Clinton had been absent during the past winter and spring in Great Britain, and had returned to New York on the 5th of July. He was now Sir Henry Clinton, having been invested with the Order of the Bath before his departure from England. He was left in New York by Sir William Howe, with the command of twenty-two battalions, and instructed to act on the defensive, or otherwise according to circumstances, always keeping in view the main object of securing New York.—*Sir William Howe's Letter*, July 7th.

General Putnam had proof of Sir Henry Clinton's being on New York Island, August 3d, by his sending up a flag of truce to claim Edmund Palmer, as a lieutenant in the British service. The flag was taken up the river to Verplanck's Point by Captain Montagu in the ship *Mercury*, and thence forwarded to Peekskill. General Putnam sent back the following reply.

"HEAD-QUARTERS, 7 August, 1777.

"Edmund Palmer, an officer in the enemy's service, was taken as a spy lurking within our lines; he has been tried as a spy, condemned as a spy, and shall be executed as a spy, and the flag is ordered to depart immediately.

"ISRAEL PUTNAM."

"P. S. He has been accordingly executed."—*Sparks*.

[2] "Your Vigilance in providing a proper Force to oppose the Enemy, and

TO LIEUTENANTS BIRD, DORSEY, CRAIG, MOORE, AND GRAY.[1]

CAMP AT THE CROSS ROADS, Augt. 15, 1777.

GENTN.,

In answer to your respective Letters without date, but presented to me yesterday, you will please to be inform'd

First, that the pay of the Horse officers was fixed in December last, and at the same rates now existing; and

Secondly that I am not conscious of ever having said, or done any thing, that could lead to a belief, that the Rank of a Lieut. of Horse was to be equal to a Captain of foot for the obvious reasons, that neither justice, or usage, would authorize it.

How it came to pass, then, that you should conceive your selves entitled to the Rank and pay of such officers is neither my business, nor Inclination to enquire into—This however I shall add,—that if your respective applications to resign, is the effect of hasty resolutions, you may take till to-morrow to reconsider, and recall your Letters.—But if on the other

the Alacrity with which the Militia have assembled, afford me great Satisfaction. If your Efforts are seasonably and skilfully seconded by your Eastern neighbors, we may hope, that General Burgoyne will find it equally difficult to make a further Progress, or to effect a Retreat. You are the best Judge with respect to the Length of Service to be required from the militia. However, as their Assistance is a Resource, which must be sparingly employ'd, I would have them detain'd no longer than is absolutely necessary. The Excuse of Want of Confidence in General Officers, which has hitherto been alleged by the eastern States, for withholding those Reinforcements from the northern Army, which were expected of them, will be obviated by the presence of Major-Genl Gates." —*Washington to Governor Clinton*, 13 August, 1777.

[1] Richard Dorsey, William Bird, George Gray, John Craig, and N. Buxton Moore, of Col. Moylan's Light Dragoons. The above reply is in Washington's writing.

hand you shd then be in the same mind, I shall be ready to receive your Commissions if they have been deliver'd or give dismissions if they have not.—

Your wishes to resign at such a period as this (after time is allowed for reconsideration) will be sufficient evidence with me, that it is a disinclination to the Service, and not the mere disappointment of Rank and pay, that causes it; and therefore it may be unnecessary for me to add, that any future application from either of you to get into the Continental Service will be improper, and as far as it is in my power to make it so unavailing—I am &c.[1]

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

CAMP, AT CROSS ROADS, 16 August, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 13th with the inclosed papers are before me.—

I wish the accounts of the two actions near Fort Schuyler had been more clear and intelligible than they are, as more dependence could then be placed on the authoriticity of the particulars, and a stronger assurance formed of the advantages being as fully on our side as they are there represented. If the loss of

[1] "I shall never wish to influence any Gentlemen to serve in this Army, if I have reason to believe they cannot do it consistent with that strict notion of Honor which should be the invariable rule of conduct for every officer, but am of opinion, nevertheless, that a Resignation in this part of a Campaign can only be warranted by treatment which would be disgraceful to bear, & therefore that your Resolution not to resign, at least, till the end of the Campaign must meet the approbation of all who wish to see you act with propriety."—*Washington to the same Lieutanants*, 17 August, 1777.

some of their most spirited leaders which happened on these occasions do not operate too forcibly on the minds of the people in that quarter, I should imagine these little successes might be productive of valuable consequences. The Indians, we know are not a very persevering people, but on the contrary are apt to be discouraged by the most trifling miscarriages; and two rebuffs like these would be no inconsiderable inducements with them to abandon the British troops, and leave them to prosecute the business alone.

These little reverses of fortune will also have their influence, in abating that confidence, which their former uninterrupted success has inspired into the enemy; and will tend proportionably to revive the drooping spirits of our army—I shall be obliged to you when you receive any more explicit intelligence of what has happened to communicate it to me.

I see, with the most sensible pleasure, the exertions of your State, dismembered as it is, and under every discouragement and disadvantage. I lament, that any causes are sufficiently powerful to prevent that effectual aid from your eastern neighbors, which the interest of the public cause, and the immediate safety of your particular State, so pressingly demand at this time. But, though it is dilatory in coming, I cannot but hope it will still come, before it is too late. I imagine one cause, and not the least material, of their delay, is an apprehension of General Howe's army. It were to be wished, his designs were once reduced to a certainty. This I should be in hopes would serve to remove that inactivity and indecision, which

I believe proceed in a great measure from suspense and uncertainty. I am however advised, that a body of New Hampshire militia, under General Stark, had joined General Lincoln at Bennington, and another of Massachusetts militia, was partly arrived, and the rest arriving at the same place. A tolerable body of men once collected there would make Mr. Burgoyne anxious for his rear, oblige him to advance circumspectly, and to leave such strong posts behind, as must make his main body very weak, and extremely capable of being repulsed by the force we shall have in front. I should not be very uneasy for the issue, if I could once see our northern army recovered from their present dejection, and restored to a tolerable degree of confidence and animation.

In addition to the two regiments, that are gone from Peekskill, I am forwarding as fast as possible, to join the northern army, Colonel Morgan's corps of riflemen, amounting to about five hundred. These are all chosen men, selected from the army at large, well acquainted with the use of rifles, and with that mode of fighting, which is necessary to make them a good counterpoise to the Indians; and have distinguished themselves on a variety of occasions, since the formation of the corps, in skirmishes with the enemy. I expect the most eminent services from them; and I shall be mistaken if their presence does not go far towards producing a general desertion among the savages. I should think it would be well, even before their arrival, to begin to circulate these ideas, with proper embellishments, throughout the

country and in the army; and to take pains to communicate them to the enemy. It would not be amiss, among other things, to magnify numbers.[1] I am of opinion, with the Council of Safety, that your presence to the northward might have a very happy influence, and, if it were compatible with the many other calls there are and will be upon you, I could wish to see you with the northern army at the head of the militia of your State.

From some expressions in a letter, which I have seen, written by General Lincoln to General Schuyler, I am led to infer, it is in contemplation to unite all the militia and Continental troops in one body, and make an opposition wholly in front. If this is really the intention, I should think it a very ineligible plan. An enemy can always act with more vigor and effect, when they have nothing to apprehend for their flanks and rear, than when they have; and it is one of the most approved and most universally practised manœuvers of war, to keep their fears continually awake on these accounts, and, when circumstances permit, to be actually in condition to give them serious annoyance in those parts. Independent of the inconveniences, that attend a situation, where the rear and flanks are constantly exposed to the insults of light parties, which may be at every moment harassing them; the necessity of never losing sight of the means

[1] "The people in the northern army seem so intimidated by the Indians, that I have determined to send up Colonel Morgan's corps of riflemen, who will fight them in their own way. They march from Trenton to-morrow morning, and reach Peekskill with all expedition."—*Washington to Major-General Putnam*, 16 August, 1777.

of a secure retreat, which ought to be the first object of an officer's care, must be exceedingly embarrassing, where there is a force in such a position as to endanger it. If a respectable body of men were to be stationed on the Grants, it would undoubtedly have the effects intimated above, would render it not a little difficult for General Burgoyne to keep the necessary communication open; and they would frequently afford opportunities of intercepting his convoys. If there should be none there, he might advance with security, leaving small posts behind, and might draw his supplies regularly and without interruption; than which nothing could tend more to facilitate his operations and give them success. These reasons make it clearly my opinion, that a sufficient body of militia should always be reserved in a situation proper to answer those purposes. If there should be more collected, than is requisite for this use, the surplusage may with propriety be added to the main body of the army. I am not, however, so fully acquainted with every circumstance, that ought to be taken into consideration, as to pretend to do any thing more than advise in the matter. Let those on the spot determine and act as appears to them most prudent. I am, &c.

P. S. It is most probable that Genl Schuyler will have put it out of the Enemy's power to avail themselves of the convenience of Water carriage, by removing all boats out of the way. If however this necessary precaution should not have occurred to him, it would be proper to remind him that all means of

facilitating their progress down the river should be cut off as speedily as possible.[1]

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, IN PARIS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 17 August, 1777.

SIR,

I have been honored with your favor of the 2d of April by Monsieur de Cenis, written in behalf of that gentleman on the credit of Monsieur Turgot's recommendation. I should have been happy, had it been in my power, in deference to your recommendation, founded upon that of so respectable a character as Monsieur Turgot, to afford Monsieur de Cenis the encouragement, to which his zeal and trouble in coming to America to offer his services give him a claim to; but such is the situation of things in our army at this time, that I am necessarily deprived of that satisfaction. Our troops being already formed and fully officered, and the number of foreign gentlemen already commissioned and continually arriving with fresh applications, throw such obstacles in the way of any future appointments, that every new arrival is only a new source of embarrassment to Congress and myself, and of disappointment and chagrin to the gentlemen,

[1] "The great bulk of the country is undoubtedly with the Congress, in principle and in zeal; and their measures are executed with a secrecy and dispatch that are not to be equalled. Wherever the king's forces point, militia, to the amount of three or four thousand, assemble in twenty-four hours; they bring with them their subsistence, &c., and, the alarm over, they return to their farms. The Hampshire Grants in particular, a country unpeopled and almost unknown in the last war, now abounds in the most active and most rebellious race of the continent, and hangs like a gathering storm upon my left."—*Burgoyne to Lord George Germaine*, 20 August, 1777.

who come over. Had there been only a few to provide for, we might have found employment for them in a way advantageous to the service and honorable to themselves; but, as they have come over in such crowds, we either must not employ them, or we must do it at the expense of one half of the officers of the army; which you must be sensible would be attended with the most ruinous effects, and could not fail to occasion a general discontent. It is impossible for these gentlemen to raise men for themselves; and it would be equally impolitic and unjust to displace others, who have been at all the trouble and at considerable expense in raising corps, in order to give them the command. Even where vacancies happen, there are always those, who have a right of succession by seniority, and who are as tenacious of this right as of the places they actually hold; and in this they are justified by the common principle and practice of all armies, and by resolutions of Congress. Were these vacancies to be filled by the foreign officers, it would not only cause the resignation of those, who expect to succeed to them, but it would serve to disgust others, both through friendship to them, and from an apprehension of their being liable to the same inconvenience themselves. This, by rendering the hope of preferment precarious, would remove one of the principal springs of emulation, absolutely necessary to be upheld in an army.

Besides this difficulty, the error we at first fell into, of prodigally bestowing rank upon foreigners, without examining properly their pretensions, having led us

to confer high ranks upon those who had none, or of a very inferior degree, in their own country, it now happens, that those who have really good pretensions, who are men of character, abilities, and rank, will not be contented unless they are introduced into some of the highest stations of the army, in which, it needs no arguments to convince you, it is impossible to gratify them. Hence their dissatisfaction and the difficulty of employing them are increased. These obstacles reduce us to this dilemma: either we must refuse to commission them at all, and leave all the expense, trouble, and risk, that have attended their coming over, uncompensated; or we must commission them without being able to incorporate or employ them; by which means enjoying the public pay and an unmeaning rank, they must submit to the mortification of being mere ciphers in the army. This last, to some of them, may not be disagreeable; but to men of sentiment, and who are actuated by a principle of honor and a desire to distinguish themselves, it must be humiliating and irksome in the extreme.

From these considerations it would be both prudent and just to discourage their coming over, by candidly opening the difficulties they have to encounter; and if, after that, they will persist in it, they can only blame themselves. I am sensible, Sir, that it is a delicate and perplexing task to refuse applications of persons patronized, (as I suppose often happens,) by some of the first characters in the kingdom where you are, and whose favor it is of importance to conciliate; but I beg leave to suggest, whether it would not be

better to do that, than by compliance to expose them to those mortifications, which they must unavoidably experience, and which they are too apt to impute to other causes than the true, and may represent under very disadvantageous colors. Permit me also to observe to you, that even where you do not promise any thing, but simply give a line of recommendation, they draw as strong an assurance of success from that as from a positive engagement, and estimate the hardship of a disappointment nearly the same in the one case as in the other. I am, &c.[1]

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON, IN CONGRESS.

NESHAMINY BRIDGE, 19 August, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

If I did not misunderstand what you or some other member of Congress said to me, respecting the appointment of the Marquis de Lafayette, he has misconceived the design of his appointment, or Congress did not understand the extent of his views; for certain It is, If I understood *him*, that he does not conceive his commission is merely honorary, but given

[1] "I was just now informed that Lieut. McNaire, of the Artillery, has been arrested, and stands bound over to the nearest Court to be held for Hertford County, for enlisting two men to serve in one of the Continental Regiments of Artillery. This, it is said, is in consequence of an act of your Assembly, by which all officers are prohibited from enlisting men within the State, unless they are of the Regiments belonging to it. I have never seen the Law, and therefore cannot pretend to determine how far the prohibition extends, but should suppose, it was only designed to prevent the Officers of other States enlisting men to fill up the Regiments assigned to their Quota. So far, it appears to me, the Act would be founded on the strictest justice; but when there is an absolute necessity for Artillery Corps,—when three such Regiments were ordered to be raised by Congress, without being apportioned on any particular State,

with a view to command a division of this army. It is true he has said, that he is young and inexperienced, but at the same time has always accompanied it with a hint, that, so soon as *I* shall think *him* fit for the command of a division, he shall be ready to enter upon the duties of it, and in the mean time has offered his service for a smaller command; to which I may add, that he has actually applied to me, by direction he says from Mr. Hancock, for commissions for his Two aids-de-camp.

What the designs of Congress respecting this Gentleman were, and what line of conduct I am to pursue to comply with their design & his expectations, I know no more than the child unborn, and beg to be instructed. If Congress meant, that this rank should be unaccompanied by command, I wish it had been sufficiently explained to him. If, on the other hand, it was intended to vest him with all the powers of a major-general, why have I been led into a contrary belief, and left in the dark with respect to my own conduct towards him? This difficulty, with the numberless applications for Employment by Foreigners, under their respective appointments, adds no

certainly each should furnish a proportion of men. This case is quite otherwise. All in this Line now with the Army have been enlisted in the New England States, a few excepted, and the greatest part in that of Massachusetts, over and above their quota of the 88 Battalions first voted, and a proportion of the additional 16. I will not say anything of the policy or impolicy of the Act, if it has a more extensive operation than I have supposed it to have; but I would take the liberty to observe that in my opinion, it would be for the advantage of the States if each of 'em had men employed in this important branch of war, not to add, that the whole ought to contribute equally to the filling of all Corps that are deemed essential, and which are not allotted to any individual one."—*Washington to the Maryland Delegates in Congress*, 17 August, 1777.

small embarrassment to a command, which, without it, is abundantly perplexed by the different tempers I have to do with, & different modes which the respective States have pursued to nominate & ar[range] their officers; the combination of all which is but a too just representation of a great chaos, from whence we are endeavoring, how successfully time can only tell, to draw some regularity and order.

I was going to address Congress for Instructions in the case of the Marquis de Lafayette, but upon second thought concluded to ask some direction of my conduct in this matter through a member, and therefore have imposed this task upon you. Let me beseech you then, my good Sir, to give me the sentiments of Congress on this matter, that I may endeavor, as far as it is in my power, to comply with them. With respect to commissions for his aid-de-camps, I told him that I should write to Mr. Hancock about them, and I wish to be instructed. The Marquis is now in Philadelphia, but expected up this day or to-morrow. With sincere regard, I am, &c.[1]

[1] The appointment of the Marquis de Lafayette as a major-general in the service of the United States, took place on the 31st of July, and is thus recorded in the Journals of Congress.

"Whereas the Marquis de Lafayette, out of his great zeal to the cause of liberty, in which the United States are engaged, has left his family and connexions, and at his own expense come over to offer his service to the United States, without pension or particular allowance, and is anxious to risk his life in our cause; Resolved, that his service be accepted, and that, in consideration of his zeal, his illustrious family, and connexions, he have the rank and commission of major-general in the army of the United States."

"I remember well a conversation's passing betwixt you and I on the subject of the Marquis de la Fyatte's commission, and that I told you it was merely honorary. In this light I look'd on it, and so did every other member of Congress. He had made an agreement with Mr. Deane, but this he gave up by Letter

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

NESHAMINI CAMP, 19 August, 1777.

I wish thro' you, Sir, to return my thanks to the Pennsylvania officers, who subscribed the Memorial you delivered me a few days since, for the obliging sentiments they are pleased to entertain of me—At the same time, you will inform them, that I am fully sensible of the justice, in which their Complaint respecting the exorbitant price of Goods and necessaries is founded, and that I painfully foresee the disagreeable consequences the measure leads to. My wishes are, that the Abuse of which they complain, should be restrained, but I know not how it is to be effected. I have represented the matter to the Congress, and have the most implicit confidence, that they will adopt any means that are practicable, to remedy the Evil. They feel it sensibly—and it is felt by all, but a Mode of Redress, I fear, will be difficult to find, as it has ever been in instances of a like nature. I am not sanguine in my expectations, that they will remove the grievance totally, yet I should hope that it may be done in part, thro' their deliberations and the interposition of the Legislative and Executive powers in the several States. I can only

to Congress, not wishing as he said to embarrass their affairs. Mr. Duer who presented this letter assur'd us he did not wish or desire Command, but gave us to understand his chief motive for going into our service was to be near you, to see service, and to give him an eclat at home, where he expected he would soon return. These you may depend on it were the reasons that induced Congress to comply with his request, and that he could not have obtain'd the commission on any other terms. The other day he surprised every body by a letter of his requesting commissions for his officers, and insinuating at the same time that he should expect a command as soon as you should think him fit for one. Depend on it, Congress never meant that he should have one, nor will not countenance him in his applications."—*Benjamin Harrison to Washington*, 20 August, 1777.

assure the Gentlemen, I shall ever be happy in affording my exertions to suppress any public abuses, so far as shall be compatible with my situation. More, I am persuaded, they will never wish or expect of me * * *

In respect to the period, from which the augmented pay is to be drawn, the Line has been already settled by Congress. They determined, that the officers appointed to serve in the present Army should receive it from the time of their appointments by their respective States. In conformity to this Rule, they have been paid without deviation, that I recollect. If there are any who have not, it has been owing to their own omissions—or if the augmented pay has been extended in any case to a remoter period for its commencement, it escaped my observation. I would also add, that if this Resolution had not been passed, I should not have considered myself authorized to grant Warrants for the augmented pay of any time preceding the 1st of January; conceiving that the old would have continued till the last of December, that being the Day when the service of the late Army generally expired,—and that the augmented pay was intended for the new. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BUCKS COTY, 20 August, 1777.

SIR,

By a Letter from Genl Schuyler of the 13th Instant it appears, that you had not reach'd Stillwater at that time; Since which I have not had any Accounts from

you, but expect you had arriv'd there soon after that date. From the various representations made to me of the disadvantage the army lay under, particularly the Militia, from an apprehension of the Indian Mode of Fighting, I have despatched Colo. Morgan with his Corps of Riflemen to your assistance, & expect they will be with you in eight days from this date. This Corps I have great dependence on, & have no doubt but they will be exceedingly useful; as a check given to the Savages, & keeping them within proper Bounds, will prevent Genl Burgoyne from getting Intelligence as formerly, & animate your other Troops from a Sense of their being more on an equality with the Enemy.[1] Coles Cortlandt's and Colonel Livingston's Regiments are also on their way from Peekskill to Join you. They must of course be with you in a very few days. With these Reinforcements, besides the Militia under General Lincoln, (which by this time must be pretty considerable,) I am in hopes you will find yourself at least equal to stop the Progress of Mr. Burgoyne, &, by cutting of his supplies of Provision, &ca to render his situation very ineligible.

Since the Enemy's fleet was seen off Sinepuxent, the 8th Inst, we have no accts from them, which can

[1] On August 4th Congress vested Gates with the command of the Northern Department, and on the 19th he joined the army at Van Schaack's Island, at the junction of the Mohawk and Hudson rivers, nine miles north of Albany. "I cannot sufficiently thank your Excellency," he wrote to Washington on the 22d, "for sending Col. Morgan's corps to this army. They will be of the greatest service to it. For until the late success this way I am told, the army were quite panic struck by the Indians, and their Tory and Canadian assassins, in Indian Dress."

be depended on. I am now of opinion, that Charles Town is the present object of General Howe's attention, though for what *sufficient* reason, unless he expected to drag this army after him by appearing at different places, & thereby leave the Country open for Genl Clinton to March out and endeavor to form a Junction with Genl Burgoyne, I am at a loss to determine. General Schuyler's sending a Reinforcement up to Fort Schuyler I think was absolutely necessary; & I am of opinion, that particular attention should be paid to the Inroads leading to that quarter, as a Successful Stroke of the Enemy there might be a means of encouraging the whole of the Six Nations to unite against us. I am, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

NESHAMINY CAMP, 21 August, 1777.

SIR,

From the time which has elapsed since General Howe departed from the Capes of Delaware, there is the strongest reason to conclude, that He is gone either far to the Eastward or Southward, and with a design to execute some determin'd plan. The danger of the sea, the injury his Troops & horses must sustain from being so long confin'd, the loss of time so late in the campaign, will scarcely admit a supposition that he is merely making a feint, and still intends to return either to the Delaware or the North River without performing some enterprise first in another quarter. The probability is in favor of a Southern

expedition, because he has been seen, since his departure from the Capes, off Sinepuxent, steering a Southern course; and because, had his destination been to the eastward, his arrival there, from the general state of the Winds, must have announced it before this, or his fleet wo'ld have been discovered by some of the cruisers on that coast.

If he is gone to the Southward, he must be gone far that way; for, had the Chesapeake Bay been his object, he would have been there long since, and the fact well established. Beyond that, there is no place short of Charlestown of sufficient importance to engage his attention. The extensive commerce, the vast accumulation of military and other stores in that Town and its dependencies, with the eclat it would give his arms if he should unfortunately take it, afford him stronger inducements to direct his operations there, than he could possibly have elsewhere. Matters being thus circumstanced, an important question arises; how this army is to be employed. If his intentions are such as I have supposed them, it appears to me that an attempt to follow him would not only be fruitless, but would be attended with the most ruinous consequences. The distance is so immense, that Genl Howe might accomplish every purpose he had in view, before we could possibly arrive to oppose him; and so long a march through an unhealthy climate at this season would debilitate and waste a principal part of our force. Added to this, after we had made a considerable progress, he might easily reëmbark his Troops and turn his arms against

Philadelphia or elsewhere, as he should think proper, without our being in a condition to give the least aid.

As these, and many other reasons, which will readily occur to Congress, will show the impracticability of our counteracting Genl Howe with any good effect in that Quarter, we have no other alternative left than to remain here Idle & inactive, on the remote probability of his returning this way, or to proceed towards Hudson's River, with a view of opposing Genl Burgoyne, or making an attempt on York Island, as the situation of affairs shall point out. A successful stroke with respect to either wo'd be attended with the most signal advantages, and would be the best compensation we could make for any losses we may sustain to the southward. Besides these considerations, if, after all our conjectures and reasoning upon the subject, Genl Howe should be gone to the eastward to coöperate with Mr. Burgoyne, the army will be, by the movement proposed, so far on its way, to prevent, I hope, the success of his enterprise.

The above reasons led me to call a Council of Genl officers this morning, to take the Subject of removing the Troops from hence into consideration; and I am happy to inform Congress, they were in sentiments with me upon the occasion, as they will perceive by a copy of the proceedings then had, which I do myself the honor of laying before them. Nevertheless, as it is a movement which may involve the most important consequences, I have thought proper to submit it to Congress for their deliberation & decision. If it is deemed expedient, we have perhaps not a moment to

lose in carrying it into execution; and, under this persuasion, I have sent Colol Hamilton, one of my aids, who will have the honor of delivering this, to bring me the result of their opinion.[1] As the northern department has been all along considered separate, & in some measure distinct, and there are special Resolves vesting the command in particular persons, —in case it should hereafter appear eligible to unite the Two Armies, it may perhaps be necessary that Congress should place the matter upon such a footing as to remove all Scruples or difficulties about the command, that could possibly arise on my arrival there. This I request, from a disposition to Harmony, & from my knowing the ill & fatal consequences that have often arisen from such controversies, and not from the most distant apprehension, that one would take place upon such an event. The thing however is possible; and to guard against it can do no injury. I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] In the council of war it was decided, as the unanimous opinion of the board of officers: first, that the enemy's fleet had most probably sailed for Charleston; secondly, that it was not expedient for the army to march southward, as it could not possibly arrive at Charleston in time to afford any succor; thirdly, that the army should move immediately towards the North River. The Marquis de Lafayette took part for the first time in the council of war convened on this occasion, and attended with the rank of major-general. Congress approved this decision, on the same day that the above letter was written; but intelligence arrived the next morning, that the British fleet had been seen far up the Chesapeake Bay, and was communicated to General Washington by President Hancock, in a letter dated August 22d, at half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, as follows: "This moment an express arrived from Maryland with an account of near two hundred sail of General Howe's fleet being at anchor in the Chesapeake Bay. In consequence of this advice, Congress have ordered the immediate removal of the stores and prisoners from Lancaster and York in this State to places of greater safety." This intelligence of course immediately changed the plan of operations.

P. S. That I may not appear inconsistent, to advise and to act before I obtain an opinion, I beg leave to mention, that I shall move the army to the Delaware to-morrow morning, to change their Ground at any rate, as their present encampment begins to be disagreeable, and would injure their Health in a short time. Our forage also begins to grow scarce here.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, AT CROSS ROADS, 22 August, 1777.

SIR,

I am honored with your favor containing the intelligence of the enemy's arrival in Chesapeake bay, and the resolution of Congress thereupon.[2] I have, in consequence of this account, sent orders to General Nash immediately to embark his brigade and Col Procter's corps of artillery, if vessels can be procured for the purpose, and to proceed to Chester; or, if

[1] "By the enclosed, which has this moment come to hand, you will perceive that the Enemy's Fleet have at length fairly entered the Chesapeake Bay, Swan Point being at least two hundred miles up. I desire you will immediately forward this account to Govr Trumbull, to be by him sent on the eastward. As there is not now the least danger of General Howe's going to New England, I hope the whole Force of that Country will turn out, and, by following the great stroke struck by Genl Stark near Bennington, entirely crush Genl Burgoyne, who by his letter to Colonel Baum seems to be in want of almost every thing. I hope you will draw in such a Force of Militia as will effectually secure your post against any attempt from New York. I shall be obliged to draw Genl Sullivan with his division down to me; for, by Genl Howe's coming so far up Chesapeake, he must mean to reach Philadelphia by that rout, tho' to be sure it is a very strange one."—*Washington to Major-General Putnam*, 22 August, 1777.

[2] On the 21st Congress approved the determination of Washington to march towards Hudson's River; but on the receipt of intelligence of the enemy's appearance in the Chesapeake, it directed the General "to proceed in such manner as shall appear to him most conducive to the general interest."—*Journals*, 22 August, 1777.

vessels cannot be provided, to hasten towards that place by land with all the despatch he can. I have also directed General Sullivan to join this army with his division as speedily as possible, and I have issued orders for all the troops here to be in motion to-morrow morning very early, with intention to march them towards Philadelphia. I am happy to find Congress have ordered the removal of the stores from Lancaster and York to places of greater safety, which is, without doubt, a very proper and necessary measure. With much respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, 23 August, 1777.

I beg leave to inform you, that the army marched early this morning, and, I expect, will encamp this Evening within Five or Six miles of Philadelphia. To-morrow morning it will move again, and I think to march It thro' the city, but without halting. I am induced to do this, from the opinion of Several of my officers and many Friends in Philadelphia, that it may have some influence on the minds of the disaffected there, and those who are Dupes to their artifices and opinions. The march will be down Front and up Chesnut street, and I presume about Seven o'clock.[1] Notwithstanding the arrival of the Enemy's

[1] "The main body of his [Washington's] army this morning passed through this city. From the State House, we had a fair view of them as they passed in their several divisions. The army alone, with their necessary cannon—and artillery for each division, exclusive of their baggage wagons, guards, &c.,

Fleet in the Chesapeake Bay, and the seeming probability that Genl Howe will debark his Troops and attempt something, yet I would take the liberty to mention, that I think the several works for the defence of the city should be carried on with the usual industry, and that no pains should be omitted to complete 'em. I would also advise, that the same Look-outs for intelligence should be continued at the Capes, and the earliest information communicated of any thing material; for, tho' the Fleet is in Chesapeake Bay, the Enemy may push in a number of vessels with Troops, and make an effort to effect some stroke agst. Philadelphia by surprise. Such an event does not seem probable while they have a large show of Force in a neighboring State; but it will be prudent to guard against it. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. I think some directions should be given Genl. Armstrong respecting the Militia.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WILMINGTON, six o'clock, P.M.,
25 August, 1777.

SIR,

The enclosed intelligence has just come to my hands. Genl Greene's and General Stephen's divisions are within a few miles of this place. I shall

which took another route, were upwards of two hours in passing with a lively, smart step."—*Henry Marchant to Governor Cooke*, 24 August, 1777.

"The army marched through the city, and was allowed to make a fine appearance, the order of marching being extremely well preserved."—*Pickering's Journal.*

[1] "*Resolved*, That the President inform General Washington, that Congress never intended by any commission hitherto granted by them, or by the Establishment of any Department whatever, to supercede or circumscribe the power of General Washington, as the Commander in chief of all the Continental Land Forces within the United States."—*Journals of Congress*, 23 August, 1777.

order them to march immediately here.[1] The two other divisons halted this day at Derby to refresh themselves; but they will come on as expeditiously as possible. There are about five hundred Pennsylvania militia at Chester and Marcus Hook, that are armed; there are a number more unarmed. I have ordered all the armed immediately down.[2] I do not know what number of militia of this State are yet collected; but I am told they turn out with great alacrity. There are a quantity of public and private stores at the Head of Elk, which I am afraid will fall into the Enemy's hands, if they advance quickly; among others, there is a considerable parcel of Salt. Every attempt will be made to save that. When I get my force collected, I shall dispose of it in the most advantageous manner in my Power. To this end I purpose to view the Grounds towards the Enemy in the morning. I am yet a stranger to them.[3] I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] "*August* 25th—The army marched through Chester to Naaman's Creek, the General and family advancing to Wilmington."—*Pickering's Journal.*

[2] "I have just recd information, that the Enemy began to land this morning about Six miles below Head of Elk, opposite to Cecil Court-House. The informant says he saw two thousand men, but he may be mistaken as to the number. I desire you to send off every man of the militia under your command, that is properly armed, as quick as possible. If they were to begin their march this night while it is cool, it will be the better. They are to proceed to Wilmington, where they will receive orders for their destination. I desire you will immediately send for General Potter, and give him directions to come on to me with all possible expedition. You must supply his place in the best manner you can. The first attempts of the Enemy will be to seize Horses, Carriages, and Cattle with light Parties, and we must endeavor to check them at their outset. Whatever militia are at Philadelphia, and equipped, should be ordered down immediately."—*Washington to Major-General Armstrong*, 25 August, 1777.

[3] "*August* 26th—The General went with all the horse, save Sheldon's, to reconnoitre."—*Pickering's Journal.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WILMINGTON, 27 August, 1777.

SIR,

I this morning returned from the Head of Elk, which I left last night. In respect to the Enemy, I have nothing new to communicate. They remain where they debarked at first. I could not find out from inquiry what number is landed, nor form an Estimate of It from the distant view I had of their Encampment. But few Tents were to be seen from Iron Hill and Gray's Hill, which are the only Eminences about Elk. I am happy to inform you, that all the public Stores are removed from thence, except about seven Thousand Bushels of corn. This I urged the commissary there to get off as soon as possible, and hope it will be effected in the course of a few days, if the enemy should not prevent it, which their situation gives them but too easy an opportunity of doing. The scarcity of Teams in proportion to the demand will render the removal rather tedious, tho' I have directed the qr. master to send some from hence to expedite the measure. A part of the Delaware militia are stationed there[1]; and about nine Hundred more from Pennsylvania are now on the march that way. I also intended to move part of the army that way to-day, but am under the necessity of deferg. it till their arms are put in order, and they are furnished

[1] General Rodney commanded the Delaware militia. General Washington wrote to him: "For the present you can do no more than keep scouts and patrols towards the enemy, to watch their motions; but as soon as you are joined by more force from this State, by the militia of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, by Richardson's battalion, I would have you move as near the enemy as you can with safety."

with ammunition, both having been greatly injured by the Heavy Rain that fell yesterday and last night.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

WILMINGTON, 27 August, 1777.

SIR,

I have received your two favors, both of the 24th, informing me of the particulars of an expedition you have lately made to Staten Island. It is unfortunate, that an affair, which had so prosperous a beginning, should have terminated so disagreeably, as in a great measure to defeat the good consequences, that might have attended it. I am however glad to hear, that the officers and men distinguished themselves by their good behavior; and, if there are any, who behaved more remarkably well than others, I should be happy to take all the notice of them consistent with propriety, that their conduct may appear to merit. I am not sufficiently acquainted with circumstances to form a certain judgment of what might have been expected from this expedition; but from the view I have of them, and from your own representation of the matter, the situation of the enemy seems to have been such, as afforded an opportunity of reaping much more decisive advantages than were in fact gained.

As your division must no doubt have been greatly harassed in this movement, their health might be very much injured by pressing them too hard in their march to join me. I would therefore wish you to

spare them as much as may be necessary to avoid that inconvenience; at the same time there ought to be no delay, but what a proper attention to the health and accommodation of the men really demands. I am, &c.

TO GENERAL CADWALADER.

WILMINGTON, 28 August, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Genl. Howe has advanced part of his Force about Two miles this side of the Head of Elk and from the information of Deserters and prisoners, there is reason to believe he is either marching, or soon will be, towards Philadelphia. If that is his object, and of which there can be but little doubt, I think many important advantages would be derived from the militia's hanging on his Rear or Right flank, after he leaves Elk, while he is opposed by this Army in Front or in such other way, as shall seem most adviseable from circumstances. But then, I am wholly at a loss to whom to address myself respecting the militia on the Eastern Shore, not knowing their officers or where they are assembling. The Congress thought proper to point out Genl. Smallwood and Colo. Gist to arrange and conduct them, who, owing I suppose to a miscarriage of the dispatches that were sent 'em have not yet reached this place, nor have I heard any thing of them. Matters being thus circumstanced, and as the aid of the militia is extremely necessary and no time is to be lost in obtaining it, I must request your good offices and interest in assisting to

assemble, spirit up and forward them, in the best manner you can towards the Head of the Bay, that they may be in a situation to annoy the enemy should they make a push against Philadelphia; giving such advice and direction to the officers as shall appear to you necessary and proper. I know well, that your situation in this instance will be delicate and not a little embarrassing; I feel myself in that predicament; yet, I trust the exigency of our affairs will not only furnish an apology, but will fully justifie your interesting yourself upon this subject. For the requisition I have made, I shall offer no apology. It is the result of necessity and founded in the most implicit confidence that you are and will be ready upon all occasions to afford every aid in your power to advance the true interest and happiness of your country. Influenced by these considerations, I have made it, and have only to add that I am &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WILMINGTON, 30 August, 1777.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you yesterday, nothing of importance has occurred, and the Enemy remain as they then were. I was reconnoitring the

[1] "Having endeavored, at the solicitation of the Count de Pulaski, to think of some mode for employing him in our service, there is none occurs to me liable to so few inconveniences and exceptions, as the giving him the command of the horse. This department is still without a head; as I have not, in the present deficiency of Brigadiers with the army, thought it advisable to take one from the foot for that command. The nature of the horse service with us being such, that they commonly act in detachment, a general officer with them is less

country and different Roads all yesterday, & am now setting out on the same business again. Sensible of the advantages of Light Troops, I have formed a Corps under the command of a Brigadier, by drafting a Hundred from each Brigade, which is to be constantly near the enemy, and to give 'em every possible annoyance. I have the honor to be, &c.

Ten o'clock.—This minute twenty-four British

necessary than at the head of the Brigades of infantry. In the absence of General Smallwood, who is ordered to put himself at the head of the Maryland militia, we shall have two Brigades without general officers. But though the horse will suffer less from the want of a general officer than the foot, a man of real capacity, experience, and knowledge in that service, might be extremely useful. The Count appears, by his recommendations, to have sustained no inconsiderable military character in his own country; and as the principal attention in Poland has been for some time past paid to the Cavalry, it is to be presumed this gentleman is not unacquainted with it. I submit it to Congress how far it may be eligible to confer the appointment I have mentioned upon him; they will be sensible of all the objections attending the measure, without my particularizing them, and can determine accordingly.

"This gentleman, we are told, has been, like us, engaged in defending the liberty and independence of his country, and has sacrificed his fortune to his zeal for those objects. He derives from hence a title to our respect, that ought to operate in his favor, as far as the good of the service will permit; but it can never be expected we should lose sight of this."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 28 August, 1777.

Dr. Franklin wrote as follows to General Washington, in a letter dated at Paris, May 29th:

"Count Pulaski of Poland, an officer famous throughout Europe for his bravery and conduct in defence of the liberties of his country against the three great invading powers of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, will have the honor of delivering this into your Excellency's hands. The Court here have encouraged and promoted his voyage, from an opinion, that he may be highly useful to our service. Mr. Deane has written so fully concerning him, that I need not enlarge; and I only add my wishes, that he may find in our armies under your Excellency occasions of distinguishing himself."

In consequence of the above recommendation, Count Pulaski was appointed to the command of the horse, on the 15th of September, with the rank of brigadier-general.

prisoners arrived, taken yesterday by Captain Lee of the light-horse.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WILMINGTON, 1 September, 1777.

SIR,

The latest and most material intelligence, I have obtained respecting the Enemy, you will find in the enclosed papers, which I do myself the Honor of transmitting to you. How far the Enemy have it in view to extend themselves in a Line from Bay to Bay, I cannot determine, But the Idea has taken place with many; and it is said to be founded on their hints to some persons, who, from accidents in some instances, & perhaps choice in others, have had a more familiar intercourse with them. I cannot suppose they have any such design, or, if they have, that it can be more than temporary for procuring supplies of provisions.

Genl Howe's *Declaration* is agreeable to his constant usage, and is what we might reasonably expect. The only difference is, the present exhibition is stiled a "Declaration." It is another effort to seduce the people to give up their rights, and to encourage our soldiery to desert.[2] The Facts contained in the Deposition of Francis Alexander, which you have also

[1] "On my return to this place last evening from White-Clay Creek, I was honored with yours of the 27th, with sundry Resolves of Congress, to which I shall pay due attention. The Enemy advanced a part of their Army yesterday to Gray's Hill, about two miles on this Side of Elk, whether intent to take post there, or to cover while they remove what Stores they found in the town, I cannot yet determine."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 29 August, 1777.

[2] This Declaration was issued on the 27th of August, at the Head of Elk, and differed from a Proclamation in nothing but the name. General Howe assured the inhabitants, that the strictest orders had been given for the preservation of

enclosed, seem to be opposed to that regularity and good discipline, which are promised by the Declaration. Yesterday there was some skirmishing between one of our advanced parties and one of the Enemy's, In which they were obliged to retreat, with the loss of an officer & three men killed, according to report. We had one private wounded. I have received no particular accounts respecting the Maryland Eastern Shore militia; from the best information I have, a great many are well disposed to turn out, but are prevented giving their aid thro the want of arms. Apprehending that the militia there would stand in need of an officer to arrange them, I wrote to Genl Cadwalader, requesting his good offices, which I am told have been exerted. Colol Gist is now gone down, and I expect will move on as soon as possible, with such as are armed, towards the Enemy. Genl Smallwood is gone to take the command of those on the Western Shore, of which I hear many are collecting; but I have no authentic advices on the subject. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Will it not be advisable to order Colo. Richardson's Regiment from their present station, to march and join the Eastern shore militia?

regularity and discipline among the soldiers, and that the severest punishment would be inflicted on any one, who should dare to plunder their property or molest their persons. He, moreover, declared that security and protection would be extended to all persons who should remain peaceably at their usual places of abode; and he promised pardon to those, who had taken an active part in the rebellion, provided they should voluntarily return to their allegiance, and surrender themselves to any detachment of the King's forces within a specified time.

"You will scarcely believe it, but I can assure you as a fact, that he [Howe] never read that curious proclamation issued at the head of Elk, till three days after it was published."—*General Charles Lee to Dr. Rush*, 4 June, 1778.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEADQUARTERS, WILMINGTON,
1 September, 1777.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your several favors of the 15th, 28, and 29 ulto, and observe their contents.[1] From the papers you have sent there can remain no doubt, that Mr. Troup's[2] true errand, what ever may be his ostensible one, was to recruit men for the British army; and after being so clearly detected should he escape punishment it cannot fail to have the disagreeable influence you mention on the minds of the people, and to be an encouragement to other adventurers. As a similar instance however has not before come under my direction I have ordered a special Court-Martial, on the occasion composed of men of judgment and moderation to sit upon the occasion, and I have every reason to expect their decision will be dispassionate and well founded. It is doubted whether the military jurisdiction comprehends a case of this kind. This will be well considered, and if the court can with propriety go into the trial and their sentence should be such as it is naturally to be expected it will be, I do not think from my

[1] The draft of this letter contained the following sentences that were stricken out in the letter sent: "The daring practice of sending their recruiting officers among us, has been for some time past so familiar with the enemy, and has been attended with so much success, that it demands vigorous measures to put a stop to it;—and how much soever we may be disposed to mercy, the public good will hardly suffer us to indulge this disposition when offenders of so dangerous a kind come under our notice."

[2] Troup was a lieutenant in the third battalion of the New Jersey (Loyal) Volunteers. He was captured while at dinner. His brother was an aid to Gates.

present view of the matter that it will be in my power to mitigate or remit his punishment, though I shall sensibly feel for his friends, who cannot but be deeply affected by his fate.

Your reason for not entering upon the business of dividing the State districts, till the ensuing meeting of the assembly is entirely satisfactory.—I have no doubt you are sufficiently impressed with the importance of carrying the measure into speedy execution and will use all your influence to have it done.

I am sorry you have no better prospect as to the number of militia, you expect collect; but considering all the circumstances you mention, it is not [to] be wondered at that a people harrassed and exhausted by having their country so long the seat of the war should be unwilling to quit their homes; especially when they have an enemy still at their doors.

I am fully convinced of the pernicious consequences of that abuse of passports you speak of. The liberty that has been taken in granting them, was altogether unauthorized by me, and contrary to my wish.—I am glad to find you are determined to put a stop to the practice with respect to your militia officers, who alone will now have it in their power to continue it, as the Continental troops are all called away; and Doctor Barnet who has been so peculiarly culpable, and who had not a shadow of right to grant a single passport, will also be immediately removed.[1]

[1] "I have sufficient evidence to believe that a constant communication and commercial intercourse has been held for a considerable time past with the enemy by many of the Inhabitants of the County of Essex. That these communications have been principally supported by means of Flaggs and Passports obtained from divers officers of the Army under your Excellency's command,

You will ere this have heard of the enemys advancing from the place of their first landing, and occupying with their van a piece of high-ground called Greigs-Hill, they still remain in this position, and it is difficult to say how soon they will alter it. All accounts agree that they are very much distressed for want of horses, numbers of which it is said died on the passage, and the best are in exceeding bad order; this will probably occasion some delay and give time for the Militia, who seem to be collecting pretty fast to join us. We have light parties constantly hovering about them, who frequently make a few prisoners,[1] and will be no inconsiderable check upon them.

They have as yet experienced little countenance from the inhabitants, and as we have accounts of their perpetrating outrages similar to those they have com-

who for some time past have been stationed at Elizabeth Town, Newark, and other places near the Enemy's Lines.

"Under color of these Flaggs or Permits, which from their Frequency must be supposed (to use the softest Term) to have been imprudently granted, great mischiefs have arisen to these parts of the Country—mischiefs, I imagine, greatly superior to the advantages that may be pretended to be derived from any Intelligence that can be gained thereby. Persons of dubious political Characters, as I am informed, have been sent over; Provisions for the aid and comfort of the British Troops furnished: a pernicious and unlawful Traffic carried on; the little specie left among us collected with the greatest avidity to maintain this execrable Trade; and the Continental currency by that means depreciated: opportunities afforded the Enemy of circulating their counterfeit Bills; and the disaffected of conveying to them Intelligence of every movement and designed operation of our Troops; the Confidence of the People in the Integrity of our officers diminished and a universal murmuring excited among the Friends of the common Cause."—*Governor Livingston to Washington*, 15 August, 1777.

The Doctor Barnet mentioned was a captain of horse, and was "much addicted to strong drink, and having very little discretion when sober." He was suspected of tory principles.

[1] The whole number already made is about 70.—*Note by Washington.*

mitted elsewhere, I am in hopes, their conduct here, as in other places, will not be of a complexion to concilitate many new partisans to their cause.

P. S. Since writing the above, the judge advocate of the Court Martial above mentioned has called upon me, and reported that the Court had proceeded upon the tryal of the Prisoner, but on account of one point of his defence which requires time to be investigated had postponed their final decision, and adjourned to a future day the 16th Inst. Mr. Troup, pretends that he came out with design to avail himself of the offer of grace held out in your proclamation, but finding the people much exasperated against him and hearing that a man had been hanged who had applied for the benefit of that proclamation he was deterred from applying to you in person till he had made his peace, through the mediation of a third person & secured his terms: That for this purpose he had communicated his intention to one Philip Schout & his mother, residing near Charlottenburgh, who were to intercede with a certain Mr. Donoworth that lives with Mr. Erskind at Ringwood, in order to engage him to solicit you in his, Mr. Troup's, behalf. He lays great stress upon this; though it is probably a mere pretence; but as the court have indulged him with time to have his witnesses produced, I shall be much obliged to you to notify the persons above mentioned that their immediate attendance at Head Qrs. is required, and to have them sent on without delay. —You will also be pleased to inform yourself of their characters, particularly in a political light.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WILMINGTON, eight o'clock, P. M., 3 September, 1777.

SIR,

I have this minute returned to Head-qrs, where I found your favor of this date, with the resolves respecting Genl Sullivan, and Colol Richardson's Battalion. I had conversed with Genl Sullivan upon the Subject, and observed to him that it was necessary an Inquiry should be had relative to the affair at Staten Island, as his conduct was censured, and much dissatisfaction prevailed. He was sensible of the propriety of the measure, and expressed a desire that It should take place, provided he could have the benefit of Genl Smallwood's testimony, who was on the expedition. That gentleman happens at this time to be in Maryland, which must necessarily delay the Inquiry, unless some mode can be agreed upon for obtaining his sentiments upon the matter.[1]

This morning the Enemy came out, with a considerable force and three pieces of artillery, against our Light advanced corps, and, after some pretty smart skirmishing, obliged them to retreat, being far inferior in number, and without Cannon. The loss on either side is not yet ascertained; ours, tho' not exactly known, is not very considerable; theirs, we have reason to believe, was much greater, as some of our parties, composed of expert marksmen, had opportunities of giving them several close, well-directed fires,

[1] Rumors had circulated to the disadvantage of General Sullivan, in regard to his expedition against Staten Island, and Congress had directed General Washington to appoint a court of inquiry to investigate the matter, and report thereon.—*Journals*, September 1st.

more particularly in one instance, when a body of riflemen formed a kind of ambuscade. They advanced about Two miles this side of Iron Hill, and then withdrew to that place, leaving a picket at Couch's Mill, about a mile in front. Our parties now lie at White-Clay Creek, except the advanced pickets, which are at Christiana Bridge. On Monday a large detachment of the enemy landed at Cecil Court-House; and this morning I had advice of their having advanced on the Newcastle Road as far as Carson's tavern. Parties of horse were sent out to reconnoiter them, which went three miles beyond the Red Lion, but could neither see nor hear of them; whence I conjecture they filed off by a road to their left, and fell in with their main body. The design of their movement this morning seems to have been to disperse our Light Troops, who had been troublesome to 'em, and to gain possession of Iron Hill, to establish a post most probably for covering their retreat in case of accidents. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

WILMINGTON, 7 September, 1777.

* * * Since General Howe's debarkation in Elk River he has moved on about seven miles; his main body now lays at Iron Hill, and ours near a vil-

[1] "I have the honor of yours of yesterday with a number of Hand Bills giving an account of our successes to the northward. They shall be distributed among the soldiery, and I doubt not but they will answer the good end which is intended by them. Every piece of good news circulated in this manner thro' the camp will certainly inspirit the troops."—*Washington to the Committee of Intelligence*, 3 September, 1777.

lage called Newport.[1] In this position the armies are from eight to ten miles apart. It is yet very uncertain what Genl Howe's plan of operations will be. Some imagine that he will extend himself from the Head Waters of Chesapeake to Delaware, and by these means not only cut off the Counties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and two of those belonging to the Delaware State, from affording us any assistance, but will secure the Horses, Cattle, and Forage, of which there are considerable quantities in that country. This, in my opinion, considering how far the Campaign is already advanced, would take up more time than he could spare. For, supposing him able to form such an extension, he would be full as far from Philada as he is at present, and he would be subject to an attack upon some part of his line, which, from its length, could not be properly supported. A few days past he advanced two or three miles forward, during which there was pretty sharp skirmishing between our light Troops and his Van. We had about forty killed and wounded, and I imagine the Enemy had considerably more, as ours were thinly posted behind cover, and they were in column. I am, &c.[2]

[1] "September 6th.—Marched to Newport, three or four miles beyond Wilmington."—*Pickering's Journal.*

[2] "Since General Howe's debarkation at the head of Chesapeake Bay, he has made very little progress, having only moved five or six miles from the shore with strong grounds in his front. Our advanced parties have had a small skirmish with his, but the damage on either side is inconsiderable. General Howe's plans are yet very mysterious; a few days ago he sent all his tents and baggage on board again, and his ships have fallen some distance down Chesapeake Bay. This can be for no other purpose but to go round the Delaware and meet him there, as he can easily extend himself across the isthmus, which is narrow. This will be a strange manœuver indeed, as it will be exposing his

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, 6 MILES FROM WILMINGTON, 9 September, 1777.

The enemy advanced yesterday with a seeming intention of attacking us upon our post near Newport. We waited for 'em the whole day; but in the Evening they halted at a place called Milltown, about two miles from us. Upon reconnoitring their situation, it appeared probable that they only meant to amuse us in front, while their real intent was to march by our right, and by suddenly passing the Brandywine and gaining the Heights upon the north side of that River, get between us and Philadelphia, and cut us off from It. To prevent this, it was judged expedient to change our position immediately. The army accordingly marched at two o'clock this morning, and will take post this evening on the high grounds near Chad's Ford.[1] We have heard nothing circumstan-

ships to some danger upon the coast, at this tempestuous season, and should an accident happen to the fleet he must be ruined. A little time must unfold his true designs, which I trust we shall be able to baffle, as the troops are in good spirits, and the people of the country show an universal good-will to oppose the common enemy."—*Washington to Governor Trumbull*, 8 September, 1777.

[1] Gordon states that the encampment taken at Redclay Creek, about halfway between Wilmington and Christiana, was condemned by General Greene as untenable, being directly in the enemy's path. (ii., 494.) This was found to be true, and when the enemy advanced on the 8th "they took post in a position to turn our right flank, the Christiana Creek being on our left, the General thought our position too dangerous to risk a battle, as the enemy refused to fight us in front. The General ordered the army to file off to the right, and take post at this place (Chad's Ford.)"—*General Greene to his wife*, 10 September, 1777.

On the 11th of September, Colonel Harrison, the Secretary of General Washington, wrote as follows to the President of Congress from Chad's Ford:

"*Eight o'clock A.M.*—The enemy are now advancing. Their present appearance indicates a disposition to pursue this route. If they do, I trust they will meet with a suitable reception, and such as will establish our liberties.

tial of the Enemy to-day. When I do, I shall immediately transmit to you an account. I have the honor to be, &c.

They are now advanced near the Brandywine, and have fired several pieces of artillery.

"*Five o'clock P.M.*—When I had the honor of addressing you this morning, I mentioned that the enemy were advancing, and had begun a cannonade. I would now beg leave to inform you, that they have kept up a brisk fire from their artillery ever since. Their advanced party was attacked by our light troops under General Maxwell, who crossed the Brandywine for that purpose, and had posted his men on some high grounds on each side of the road. The fire from our people was not of long duration, as the enemy pressed on in force, but was very severe. What loss the enemy sustained cannot be ascertained with precision; but from our situation and briskness of the attack, it is the general opinion, particularly of those who were engaged, that they had at least three hundred men killed and wounded. Our damage is not exactly known; but, from the best accounts we have been able to obtain, it does not exceed fifty in the whole.

"After this affair, the enemy halted upon the heights, where they have remained ever since, except a detachment of them which filed off about eleven o'clock from their left, and which has since passed the Brandywine at Jones's Ford, between five and six miles above Chad's. The amount of it is not known, the accounts respecting it being various, some making it two or three thousand strong and others more. Generals Sullivan, Stirling, and Stephens with their divisions, are gone in pursuit, and to attack it if they can with any prospect of success. There has been a scattering, loose fire between our parties on each side of the creek since the action in the morning, which just now became warm, when General Maxwell pushed over with his corps, and drove them from their ground with the loss of thirty men left dead on the spot (among them a captain of the forty-ninth), and a number of intrenching tools with which they were throwing up a battery. At half after four o'clock, the enemy attacked General Sullivan at the ford next above this, and the action has been very violent ever since. It still continues. A very severe cannonade has begun here too; and I suppose we shall have a very hot evening. I hope it will be a happy one."

"Having more materially considered the situation and circumstances of the enemy since Colo. Hamilton wrote you this morning, It appears to me, that the Forces, under your command, cannot be employed to so much advantage in any way, as by falling on the Enemy's Rear and attacking them as often as possible. I am persuaded many advantages will result from this measure. It will greatly retard their march and give us time, and will also oblige them, either to keep a strong guard with their sick and wounded, with which they must now be much incumbered, or to send 'em back to their shipping under a

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.[1]

CHESTER twelve o'clock at Night,
11 September, 1777.

SIR,

I am sorry to inform you, that, in this day's engagement, we have been obliged to leave the enemy masters of the field. Unfortunately the intelligence recd., of the enemy's advancing up the Brandywine & crossing at a ford about six miles above us, was uncertain & contradictory, notwithstanding all my pains to get the best. This prevented my making a disposition adequate to the force with which the enemy attacked us on our right; in consequence of which, the troops first engaged were obliged to retire before they could be reinforced. In the midst of the attack on our right, that body of the enemy, which remained on the other side of Chad's Ford, crossed it, & attacked the division there under the command of General Wayne, & the light troops under Genl Maxwell, who, after a severe conflict, also retired. The militia under the command of Major-General Armstrong, being posted at a ford about two miles below Chad's, had no opportunity of engaging.

large escort, which you will have an opportunity of attacking with a good prospect of success. Add to these considerations, that before you could join me by a circuitous march and your Troops were rested, matters might be brought to a crisis. I therefore wish you to pursue the line of conduct I have pointed out, and must urge you to every possible degree of diligence and despatch."—*Washington to General Smallwood*, Derby, 12 September, 1777.

[1] It is told of this letter that Washington after the fatigues of this day was too wearied to write to Congress, and directed one of his aides to do it. Harrison was too "distressed," and so it fell to Pickering, the Adjutant-General. "I wrote it and gave it to the General to read. He, with perfect composure, directed me to add a consolatory hope that another day would give a more fortunate result." *Greene, Life of Nathaniel Greene*, i., 454. The draft and original letter are both in Pickering's handwriting.

But altho we fought under many disadvantages, and were, from the causes above mentioned, obliged to retire, yet our loss of men is not, I am persuaded, very considerable; I believe much less than the enemy's. We have also lost seven or eight pieces of cannon, according to the best information I can at present obtain. The baggage, having been previously moved off, is all secure, saving the men's blankets, which being at their backs, many of them doubtless were lost. I have directed all the troops to assemble behind Chester, where they are now arranging for this night. Notwithstanding the misfortune of the day, I am happy to find the troops in good spirits; and I hope another time we shall compensate for the losses now sustained. The Marquis de Lafayette was wounded in the leg, & General Woodford in the hand; divers other officers were wounded, & some slain; but the numbers of either cannot now be ascertained. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

P. S. It has not been in my power to send you earlier intelligence, the present being the first leisure moment I have had since the action.[2]

[1] "On the 11th instant, we had a pretty general engagement with the enemy, which from some unlucky incidents terminated against us, so far as our being obliged after an obstinate action to quit the field;—with the loss of some men and artillery. But from every account we have reason to believe the enemy suffered much more than we did in the number of killed and wounded.—Our troops have not lost their spirits, and I am in hopes we shall soon have an opportunity of compensating for the disaster we have just sustained.

"We brought the Army to this place to refresh them with convenience and security and are just beginning our march to return towards the enemy."—*Washington to General Heath*, 14 September, 1777.

[2] Congress had ordered Washington "to appoint a proper person at headquarters to write to the president twice a day, or oftener if necessary, and give information of the position and movements of the armies."—*Journals of Congress*, 9 September, 1777.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, GERMANTOWN,
13 September, 1777.

SIR,

I have been honored with your favor of this date. I heartily wish the works on the Delaware were completed; but I think, and in this opinion my officers concur, that the service will be injured if any part of the Continental troops were now to be employed about 'em. If we should be able to oppose General Howe with success in the Field, the works will be unnecessary; If not, and he should force us from hence, he will certainly possess himself of 'em. But, to prevent his attempting it now, I have directed the meadows on Province Island to be overflowed immediately, and any other grounds that may be thought necessary for that purpose. The works have been more peculiarly made under the direction of Monsieur Ducoudray, and I doubt not he will pay every attention to their completion and security, that the situation of affairs will admit of. A part of the militia under General Armstrong will be posted along Schuylkill, to throw up Redoubts at the different Fords, which will be occasionally occupied while I move to the other side with the main body of the army.[1] This disposition appears to be most eligable, from a consideration of all circumstances, and better than if any part of our present force was to be employed at the Forts. If further reinforcements of the

[1] "*September* 14th—The army, having yesterday cleaned their arms, and received ammunition to complete forty rounds a man, this day marched up a few miles and recrossed the Schuylkill at Levering's Ford, the water being nearly up to the waist. . . . 15*th*. We advanced to the Warren tavern."—*Pickering's Journal.*

militia should come in, perhaps they may be more properly assigned to that business, than any we now have.

Your letter respecting General Deborre just now came to hand. I shall transmit to him a Copy of it and of the resolution. There can be no Court of inquiry into his conduct at this time. As soon as the State of the Army will admit, it will be held.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

BUCK TAVERN, 15 September, 1777, 3 o'clock P.M.

SIR,

Your favor of yesterday with its several Inclosures came to hand last night. Tho. I would willingly pay every attention to the Resolutions of Congress, yet in the late instance, respecting the recall of Genl. Sullivan I must beg leave to defer giving any order about it, till I hear further from that Honble. Body. Our situation at this time is critical and delicate, and nothing should be done to add to its embarrassments. We are now most probably on the point of another action, and to derange the Army by withdrawing so many Genl. Officers from it, may and must be attended with many disagreeable, if not ruinous consequences. Such a proceeding at another time might not produce any bad effects—but how can the Army be possibly conducted with a prospect of success if the Genl. Officers are taken off in the moment of Battle? Con-

[1] General Deborre, in the action on the Brandywine, commanded a brigade in General Sullivan's division. By a vote of Congress he was recalled from the army, till the charges against him should be investigated. The next day he waited on the President, and resigned his commission.

gress may rely upon it such a measure will not promote, but injure the service. It is not my wish to prevent, or to delay a proper inquiry into Genl. Sullivan's conduct a single instant, when the circumstances of the Army will admit.—But now they prohibit it, and I think the suspension in his command also. The recall of Genl. St. Clair obliged me to part with Genl. Lincoln, whom I could but illy spare, so that the whole charge of his Division is now upon Genl. Wayne, there being no other Brigadrs. in it than himself. The Maryland Troops, if Genl Sullivan is taken away, will not have one Genl. Officer, Genl Smallwood being at the Head of the Militia coming from that State, and Genl. De Borre suspended. Added to this, Colo Gist who commands one Regiment of them, is now from it, by order. In a word Sir, whether the charges alledged against Genl. Sullivan are true or false, or whether his conduct has been exceptionable or not, I am satisfied the resolution for his recall at this time was unhappily adopted, and if carried into execution, will not fail to add new difficulties to our present distresses. And, I am obliged to observe, in justice to my own Character, that I can not be answerable for the consequences which may arise from a want of Officers to assist me.[1]

[1] The principal disasters of the battle of Brandywine happened in the quarter where General Sullivan commanded. Not being a favorite with several members of Congress, these persons censured him severely, and procured a resolve for his recall from the army, till the inquiry before ordered, respecting the affair at Staten Island, should be made. The execution of the resolve was suspended, in consequence of the above letter from the Commander-in-chief. A court of inquiry afterwards honorably acquitted General Sullivan.

The Baron de Kalb was appointed a major-general in the American service on the 15th of September, and his commission was to bear the same date as that of the Marquis de Lafayette.

It gives me great pleasure to find Genl. Gates is on so respectable a footing, and I hope, our Affairs in that Quarter in the course of a little time, will be in as prosperous a train as we could reasonably wish.

The Main body of the Enemy, from the best intelligence, I have been able to get, lies near Dilworth Town, not far from the Field of Action, where they have been busily employed in burying their Dead, which from accounts amounted to a very considerable number.[1] We are moving up this Road to get between the Enemy and the Swedes' Ford, and to prevent them from turning our right flank, which they seem to have a violent inclination to effect by all their movements.

I would beg leave to recommend in the most earnest manner, that some Board or Committee be appointed or some mode adopted for obtaining supplies of Blankets for the Troops. Many are now without and the season becoming cold, they will be injured

[1] The day after the battle of Brandywine, while the enemy were at Dilworthtown, Sir William Howe wrote as follows to General Washington :

"The number of wounded officers and men of your army in this neighbourhood, to whom every possible attention has been paid, will nevertheless require your immediate care, as I shall not be so situated as to give them the necessary relief. Any surgeons you may choose to send to their assistance, upon application to me, in consequence of your orders, shall be permitted to attend them. The officers' paroles will be taken, and the men considered as prisoners of war."

General Washington replied :—"The attention, which you are pleased to assure me has been paid to the officers and privates of the army under my command, who were unfortunately wounded in the action on Thursday last, has a claim to my acknowledgments. Agreeably to the permission you offer, I have directed the following gentlemen, Doctors Rush, Leiper, Latimer, and Willet, a mate in the hospital, with their attendants, to wait upon you and take them under their care. The wounded will be considered in the light you place them."

in their health and unfitted for service, unless they are immediately provided with them. Our supplies in this instance, as well as in Every Article of Cloathing cannot be too great, as there are frequent losses, not easily to be avoided.

I would also observe that, I think in point of prudence and sound policy, every species of provisions, should be removed from the City, except such as will be necessary to supply the present demands of this Army. I have been told, there are considerable quantities in private hands, which should not be suffered to remain a moment longer than they can be conveyed away. I have &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, 19 September, 1777.

SIR,

I was honored this morning with your favors of the 17th & 18th with their Inclosures.

I am much obliged to Congress for the late instance of their confidence, expressed in their Resolution of the 17th, and shall be happy if my conduct in discharging the objects they had in view should be such as to meet their approbation.[1] I am now repassing

[1] In the prospect of the speedy removal of Congress from Philadelphia, and the uncertainty as to the time of the next meeting, enlarged powers were delegated to the Commander-in-chief, suited to the exigency of the occasion, and involving a high responsibility.—"Resolved, that General Washington be authorized and directed to suspend all officers who misbehave, and to fill up all vacancies in the American army, under the rank of brigadiers, until the pleasure of Congress shall be communicated; to take, wherever he may be, all such provisions and other articles as may be necessary for the comfortable subsistence of the army under his command, paying or giving certificates for the

the Schuylkill at Parker's Ford, with the main body of the army, which will be over in an Hour or two, tho' it is deep and rapid.[1] Genl Wayne, with the division under his command, is on the rear of the Enemy, and will be joined to-morrow or next day, I expect, by Genl Smallwood and Colo Gist with their corps.[2] As soon as the troops have crossed the river, I shall march them as expeditiously as possible towards Fatland, Swedes', & the other fords, where it is most probable the Enemy will attempt to pass.

When I left Germantown with the army, I hoped I should have an opportunity of attacking them, either in Front or on their flank, with a prospect of success; but unhappily a variety of causes concurred to prevent it. Our march, in the first place, was greatly impeded thro' want of provisions, which delayed us so long that the enemy were apprized of our motions, and gained the grounds near the White Horse Tavern, with a part of their army turning our right flank, whilst another part, compos-

same; to remove and secure, for the benefit of the owners, all goods and effects, which may be serviceable to the enemy; provided that the powers hereby vested shall be exercised only in such parts of these States as may be within the circumference of seventy miles of the head-quarters of the American army, and shall continue in force for the space of sixty days, unless sooner revoked by Congress."—*Journals*, September 17th.

[1] "His Excellency General Washington was with the troops who passed us here to the Perkiomen. The procession lasted the whole night, and we had all kinds of visits from officers wet to the breast, who had to march in that condition the cold, damp night through, and to bear hunger and thirst at the same time. This robs them of courage and health, and instead of prayers we hear from most, the national evil, curses."—*Muhlenberg's Diary*, 19 September, 1777.

[2] On this day Wayne was at Paoli. Gist had formed a junction with Smallwood on the evening of the 18th, and the combined detachments were near James Milligan's tavern on the 19th.

ing the main body, were more advanced towards our left. We should have disappointed them in their design by getting on their left; But the Heavy rain, which fell on Tuesday evening & in the course of that night, totally unfitted our Guns for service and nearly the whole of the ammunition with which the army had been compleated a day or two before, being forty rounds p. man. At first I expected that the loss was by no means so considerable, and intended only to file off with the troops a few miles to replace it & clean the arms, & then to proceed on my original plan; but on examination I found it as I have mentioned, and that we had not a sufficient supply with us to furnish the men with the necessary complement. In this situation it was judged necessary, that we should proceed as far as Reading Furnace for the security of the army.[1] On these accounts, particularly the latter, matters have not been conducted as I intended & wished, & the enemy have had an opportunity of making their advances without being attacked. I yet hope, from the present state of the river, that I shall be down in time to give them a meeting, and, if unfortunately they should gain Philadelphia, that it will not be without loss. I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] "Yesterday the enemy moved from Concord by the Edgemont road toward the Lancaster road, with evident design to gain our right flank. This obliged us to alter our position and march to this place, from whence we intend immediately to proceed to Warwick. We suffered much from the severe weather yesterday and last night, being unavoidably separated from our tents and baggage which not only endangers the health of the men; but has been very injurious to our arms and ammunition. These, when, we arrive at Warwick, we shall endeavor as soon as possible to put again into a proper condition; to do which and to refresh the men, are two principal motives for going there."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 17 September, 1777. He was then at Yellow Springs.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

CAMP, 22 September, 1777.

SIR,

The distressed situation of the army for want of blankets, and many necessary articles of cloathing, is truly deplorable; and must inevitably be destructive to it, unless a speedy remedy be applied. Without a better supply than they at present have, it will be impossible for the men to support the fatigues of the campaign in the further progress of the approaching inclement season. This you well know to be a melancholy truth. It is equally the dictate of common sense and the opinion of the Physicians of the army, as well as of every officer in it. No supply can be drawn from the public magazines. We have therefore no resource but from the private stock of individuals. I feel, and I lament, the absolute necessity of requiring the inhabitants to contribute to those wants, which we have no other means of satisfying, and which if unremoved would involve the ruin of the army, and perhaps the ruin of America. Painful as it is to me to order and as it will be to you to execute the measure, I am compelled to desire you immediately to proceed to Philadelphia, and there procure from the inhabitants contributions of blankets and cloathing, and materials to answer the purposes of both, in proportion to the ability of each. This you will do with as much delicacy and discretion, as the nature of the business demands; and I trust the necessity will justify the proceeding in the eyes of every person well affected to the American cause, and that all good citizens will chearfully afford their

assistance to soldiers, whose sufferings they are bound to commiserate, and who are eminently exposed to danger and distress, in defence of every thing they ought to hold dear.

As there are also a number of horses in Philadelphia both of public and private property, which would be a valuable acquisition to the enemy, should the city by any accident fall into their hands, you are hereby authorized and commanded to remove them thence into the Country to some place of greater security, and more remote from the operations of the enemy. You will stand in need of assistance from others to execute this commission with despatch and propriety, and you are therefore empowered to employ such persons as you shall think proper to aid you therein. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

[1] "I do not wish your exertions to be be solely directed to obtaining Shoes and Blankets—extend them to every other article you know to be material for the army; your own prudence will point out the least exceptionable means to be pursued in these instances—but remember, that delicacy and a strict adherence to the ordinary modes of application must give place to our necessities. We must if possible, accommodate the soldiery with such articles as they stand in need of or we shall have just reasons to apprehend the most injurious and alarming consequences from the approaching season. . . . The business you are upon I know is disagreeable, and perhaps in the execution you may meet with more obstacles than were at first apprehended and also with opposition. To the parties I have mentioned, call in such a number of militia as you may think necessary, observing however, over the conduct of the whole, a strict discipline, to prevent every species of rapine and disorder."—*Washington to Hamilton*, 22 September, 1777.

"I am glad you have began the collection of Blankets and Shoes. This business cannot be carried to too great an extent, and I think if the measure is properly pursued, great quantities of Blankets, Rugs and coverlids may be collected in the back Counties. The approach of the enemy to Philadelphia hindered the officers I sent upon that Business from doing much, the disaffected hid their goods the moment the thing took wind, and our friends had before parted with all they could spare."—*Washington to Elbridge Gerry*, 27 September, 1777.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, CAMP, NEAR POTTSGROVE, 23 September, 1777.

I have not had the honor of addressing you since your adjournment to Lancaster, and I sincerely wish that my first Letter was upon a more agreeable subject.[1] The Enemy, by a variety of perplexing manœuvers thro' a Country from which I could not derive the least intelligence (being to a man disaffected), contrived to pass the Schuylkill last night at the Fatland and other fords in the neighborhood of it. They marched immediately towards Philadelphia, and I imagine their advanced parties will be near that City to-night. They had so far got the start before I recd. certain intelligence that any considerable number had crossed, that I found it in vain to think of overtaking their Rear, with Troops harassed as ours had been with constant marching since the Battle of Brandywine; and therefore concluded, by the advice of all the gen'l officers, to march from this place tomorrow morning towards Philadelphia, and on the Way endeavor to form a junction with the Continental Troops under General McDougall, from Peekskill, and the Jersey militia under Genl Dickinson, both of whom are, I hope, on this side of the Delaware.[2]

[1] When the enemy approached Philadelphia, September 18th, Congress adjourned to Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, where they assembled on the 27th. The same day they adjourned to York beyond the Susquehanna, in which place they met on the 30th, and continued there till the British evacuated Philadelphia.

[2] This is not a strictly accurate account of the decision of the council as entered upon the minutes; for it was unanimously determined that "from the present state of the army, it would not be advisable to advance upon the enemy, but remain upon this ground or in the neighborhood till the detachments and expected re-inforcements come up."

I am also obliged to wait for Genl Wayne and Genl Smallwood, who were left upon the other side of Schuylkill, in hopes of falling upon the Enemy's Rear; but they have eluded them as well as us.

When I last recrossed the Schuylkill, it was with a firm intent of giving the Enemy Battle wherever I should meet them; and accordingly advanced as far as the Warren Tavern upon the Lancaster Road, near which place the two armies were upon the point of coming to a General Engagement, but were prevented by a most violent flood of Rain, which continued all the day and following night.[1] When it held up, we had the mortification to find that our ammunition, which had been compleated to forty rounds a man, was entirely ruined; and in that Situation we had nothing left for it but to find out a strong piece of Ground, which we could easily maintain till we could get the Arms put in order, and a Recruit of Ammunition. Before this could be fully effected, the Enemy marched from their position near the White Horse Tavern, down the Road leading to the Swedes' Ford. I immediately crossed the Schuylkill above them, and threw myself full in their front, hoping to meet them in their passage, or soon after they had passed the river. The day before yesterday

[1] "On the 17th, in the morning, intelligence was brought that the enemy were advancing, upon which the army were paraded, and a disposition made to receive them, the picketts had exchanged a few shots, when a violent shower of rain, which continued all the day and the following night prevented all further operations."— *Washington's Statement to Council of Officers*, 23 September, 1777. Pickering states that the picket, "just posted (about three hundred strong), shamefully fled at the first fire," and orders were given to march to Yellow Springs, a tedious march of about ten miles over bad roads.

they were again in motion, and marched rapidly up the road leading towards Reading. This induced me to believe that they had two objects in View, one to get round the right of the Army, the other perhaps to detach parties to Reading, where we had considerable quantities of military Stores. To frustrate those intentions, I moved the army up on this side of the River to this place, determined to keep pace with them; but early this morning I recd. intelligence, that they had crossed the fords below.[1] Why I did not follow immediately, I have mentioned in the former part of my letter; but the strongest reason against being able to make a forced march is the want of shoes. Messieurs Carroll, Chase, and Penn, who were some days with the army, can inform Congress in how deplorable a situation the Troops are, for want of that necessary article. At least one thousand men are bare-footed, and have performed the marches in that condition. I was told of a great number of shoes in the hands of private people in Philadelphia, and sent down to secure them; but I doubt the Approach of the Enemy will prevent it.

I have planned a method of throwing a Garrison into Fort Mifflin. If it succeeds, and they, with the assistance of the Ships and Galleys, should keep the obstructions in the River, Genl Howe's situation in

[1] "On the night of the 20th the army decamped and marched up to the Trap, and on the 21st to within four miles of Pottsgrove, the enemy's van then being at French's Creek upon the west side of the Schuylkill. In the night of the 22d, advice was received that the enemy had crossed Schuylkill at Gordon's Ford, below us, but the account was again contradicted; but in the morning of the 23d certain accounts came to hand that they really had crossed in large numbers, and were moving towards Philadelphia."— *Washington's Statement to Council of Officers*, 23 September, 1777.

Philadelphia will not be the most agreeable; for if his supplies can be stopped by Water, it may be easily done by land. To do both shall be my utmost endeavor; and I am not yet without hope, that the acquisition of Philadelphia may, instead of his good fortune, prove his Ruin. General St. Clair, who has been constantly with the Army for some time past, can give you many pieces of information, which may have escaped me, and therefore I refer you to him for many particulars. * * *[1]

[1] "The action which happened on the 11th near Chadsford, on the Brandywine, you will have heard of. I have not time to give you the particulars. A contrariety of Intelligence, in a critical and important point, contributed greatly if it did not entirely bring on the misfortunes of that day. The action however was warm and I am convinced, the Enemy's loss was considerable and much superior to ours. After this affair and refreshing our Troops a few days, I determined to try a second action. For this purpose, I advanced with the Army as soon as it was in a situation and was pushing to gain the grounds on their left. I believe we should have effected it, and if not a general attack would have been made on their Front, had not my views unfortunately been totally frustrated by a most severe rain which came on, the day preceeding that of the intended action. This obliged us to change our Rout, and continuing with great violence till late in the night, rendered our Arms unfit for use and destroyed almost all the ammunition in the men's pouches, who were out and exposed during the whole time. Genl. Howe in two days after fell down towards Schuylkill near the Valley forge. We did the same, and passed with the main body of the Army above, and marching down, took post in his Front, while a part of our Force was left to hang on his Rear. In this situation matters remained a day or two when the Enemy extended themselves up the river, as if they meant to turn our Right and, countermarching in the night crossed some miles below us; The River being fordable in almost every part. They have advanced towards the city, and were from the last advices at and about Germantown. It is probable some of their Parties have entered the city and their whole Army may, if they incline to do it, without our being able to prevent them. Here I must remark, that our distress for want of shoes, is almost beyond conception and that from this circumstance our operations and pursuit have been impracticable. I am taking every measure to obtain a supply, and I hope to be able to move in a short time especially when we are joined by some Reinforcements that are coming on, and that under the favor of heaven, our affairs will assume a more agreeable aspect, than they now have." —*Washington to Brigadier-General Nelson*, 27 September, 1777.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

CAMP, ON SCHUYLKILL, 34 MILES FROM PHILADELPHIA,
23 September, 1777.

DR SIR,

The situation of our affairs in this Quarter calls for every aid and for every effort. Genl Howe, by various manœuvers and marching high up the Schuylkill, as if he meant to turn our Right Flank, found means by countermarching to pass the River, several miles below us, last night, which is fordable almost in every part, and is now fast advancing towards Philadelphia. I therefore desire, that, without a moment's loss of time, you will detach as many effective rank and file, under proper generals and other officers, as will make the whole number, including those with Genl McDougall, amount to twenty-five hundred privates & non-commissioned fit for duty. The corps under Genl McDougall, to my great surprise, by a Letter from him some days ago, consisted only of nine hundred & Eleven. You will direct the Officers, commanding the Detachment now ordered, to proceed as expeditiously as they can to reinforce me. The Rout through Morris Town and over Coryell's Ferry will be best for them to pursue. Before they arrive at the ferry, they will hear where I am; but that they may know their destination, when they are in Two days' march of It, they are to advise me by Express, and I will write on the Subject.

I must urge you, by every motive, to send on this Detachment without the least possible delay. No considerations are to prevent it. It is our first object to defeat, if possible, the Army now opposed to us

here. That the passes in the Highlands may be perfectly secure, you will immediately call in all your forces now on command at outposts. You must not think of covering a whole country by dividing 'em; & when they are ordered in & drawn together, they will be fully competent to repel any attempt, that can be made by the Enemy from below in their present situation. Besides, if you are threatened with an Attack, you must get what aid you can from the militia. The Detachment will bring their Baggage, but I wish 'em to come with no more than will be absolutely necessary. That you may not hesitate about complying with this order, you are to consider it as peremptory & not to be dispensed with. Colonel Malcom's regiment will form a part of the detachment. I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

P. S. The Troops now ordered need not bring any artillery.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

CAMP, NEAR POTTSGROVE, 24 September, 1777.

SIR,

This army has not been able to oppose Genl: Howe's with the success that was wished, and needs a Reinforcement. I therefore request, if you have been so fortunate as to oblige Genl Burgoyne to

[1] General Putnam had formed a plan for a separate attack on the enemy at Staten Island, Paulus Hook, York Island, and Long Island, at the same time. He had obtained accurate knowledge of the enemy's strength, and Governor Trumbull had encouraged him to expect large reinforcements of militia from Connecticut for this purpose, which, with the Continental forces under his command, and the aids he might procure from New York and New Jersey, he believed would enable him to execute his design.—*MS. Letter*, September 13th. The above order from General Washington put an end to the project.

retreat to Ticonderoga, or If you have not and circumstances will admit, that you will order Colonel Morgan to join me again with his Corps. I sent him up when I thought you materially wanted him; and if his services can be dispensed with now, you will direct his immediate return. You will perceive, I do not mention this by way of command, but leave you to determine upon It according to your situation. If they come, they should proceed by water from Albany, as low down as Peekskill. In such case you will give Colonel Morgan the necessary orders to join me with despatch. I am, &c.[1]

TO LORD STIRLING.

HEAD QUARTERS, 25 September, 1777.
11 o'clock, A. M.

MY LORD,

I have your favor of 8 oclock now before me, and am surprised to find the Enemy in the same situation after the movement which they appear'd to be making according to the Information given by Genl. Reed.—

I am sorry the Picquets march'd from hence yesterday, and I am still more concern'd that Genl. Armstrong with the militia moved to the Trap, as it was

[1] To this letter General Gates replied :—"Since the action of the 19th ultimo, the enemy have kept the ground they occupied the morning of that day, and fortified their camp. The advanced sentries of my pickets are posted within shot, and opposite the enemy's. Neither side has given ground an inch. In this situation your Excellency would not wish me to part with the corps the army of General Burgoyne are most afraid of."—Dated October 5th. This letter was written only two days before the decisive action against Burgoyne, and yet, after that event, General Gates complied tardily with General Washington's request. Morgan was detained till after the capitulation, when the troops were no longer wanted in the Northern Department.

owing to a mistake they were not halted along with the other Troops at this place, the countermand of the march being intended for the whole, tho' I presume it never reached Genl. Armstrong.—

Under these circumstances, and the present appearance of the weather (which has induced me to pitch our Tents, and see what the clouds have in charge) I mean to halt here at least to day, especially as I find Genl. Wayne will not be up till night (if then), and Smallwood not till to morrow. I should be glad, therefore, if your Lordship would consult Genl. Armstrong and the other General Officers with you, and determine whether it will be best for you to march back to the Picquets, and for Maxwell's Corps to join their respective Brigades immediately or wait till tomorrow.

That you may be the better enabled to determine this point, I am to inform you, that I have directed Genl. McDougall to Halt at a place mark'd on the map Markeys, on the Skippack Road, between Welgers and Pennebakers Mill (at a star in the Fork of Perkiomy), and officers are gone out to view the grounds thereabouts, to see if it would be a convenient situation to assemble our troops at, and form a Camp; at the same time I must add that the Current Sentiment of the Genl. Officers here, is that it is too near the Enemy till we are in a better condition to meet them on any ground than we seem to be at present.—I shall only add that the reason for halting McDougall there, is to save him the fatigue of a Counter March if we should move that way, as his Troops

must be greatly fatigued by the length, and (of late) the rapidity of his march to form the junction with us. How far his situation there may be eligible, a few hours, with the intelligence they may bring, will probably determine. Your Lordship will, as before desired, take the sentiments of the Officers with you on these matters & let me know the result. I am, &c.[1]

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

PERKIOMY CREEK IN PHILADEPHIA,
28 September, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the eleventh instant came to my hands yesterday.

It was always my intention, if agreeable to your mother, to give you the offer of renting her dower-estate in King William during my interest therein, so soon as you came of age to act for yourself. On two accounts I resolved to do this,—first, because I was desirous of contracting my own business into as narrow a compass as possible; and, secondly, because I thought an estate, so capable of improvement as that is (in the hands of a person who had a permanent interest in it, and the means withal) ought not to be

[1] "We are now in motion, and advancing to form a junction with Genl. McDougall. I expect to be joined in a day or two by Genl. Foreman, with fourteen or fifteen hundred Jersey militia. The main body of the enemy are also advancing towards Philadelphia, and were below German Town from my last advices, which also mentioned that a thousand infantry, with about 100 Dragoons, had filed off towards Chesnut Hill. I fear they are pushing for Bristol, after our stores, which I am apprehensive are not entirely removed, tho I gave orders for it, the moment I heard they were there."—*Washington to Elbridge Gerry*, 26 September, 1777.

neglected till such time as an unfortunate event, and perhaps a distant one, might put you in possession.

The little attention I have been able to pay to any part of my own private business for three years last past is the cause why this among other matters has escaped me, but since you have mentioned it yourself, I have only to add, that it will be quite agreeable to me that you should have the land, and everything thereon, except breeding mares, if any there be, and fillies.

To regulate the rent by the rule you have mentioned, I could not consent to, because, if the plantation had been under good management, it would have fixed it higher than you ought to give; if, under bad management, which I believe to be the case, it would fix it too low, and might settle it at nothing. The only true criterion is to determine what so much land, with so much marsh, in such a part of the country, would rent for; and next the annual value of so many slaves, estimating them at their present worth, at the same time having respect to the advantages and disadvantages of the old and the young, as the one is declining and the other improving.

As you are desirous of having the matter fixed as speedily as possible—as the distance between us is too great—the season far advanced—and letters too apt to miscarry to negotiate a business of this kind, in that way, and as I wish for no more than impartial gentlemen, unconnected with both of us, shall say I ought to have; I am content to leave the valuation of the whole to General Nelson, Colonel Braxton, and George

Webb, Esq. I mention these gentlemen because they are persons of character and because no time may be lost in the appointment.

Whatever rent they shall fix upon the land, and whatever hire for the negroes, I contentedly will take. The stock of every kind (except mares and fillies), and plantation utensils and working tools may also be valued; at which you may take them. By this means the whole business may be finished at once. That these gentlemen (if you approve the method of ascertaining the rent) may know it is with my approbation, the request is made to them you will show them this letter, and at the same time apologize in my name for the trouble it will give them if they are obliging enough to undertake it.

My extreme hurry, especially at this juncture, only allows me time to add my love to Nelly, and to assure you that I am, with sincere regard and affection, dear sir, yours.

P. S. In the present fluctuating, state of things, there is one thing which justice to myself and your mother requires me to condition for, and that is that the rent stipulated shall have some relative value, to secure an equivalent for the land and slaves; otherwise, as the lease will be an absolute conveyance of the estate from your mother and me, we may at the end of a few years, if paper money continues to depreciate, get nothing for it. I do not mean by this to insinuate that I am unwilling to receive paper money—on the contrary, I shall, with cheerfulness receive payment in anything that has a currency at the time of

payment, but of equal value then to the intrinsic worth at the time of fixing the rent. In a word, that I may really, and not nominally, get what was intended as a rent.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, TWENTY MILES FROM PHILADELPHIA,
3 October, 1777.

SIR,

Yesterday afternoon I had the honor to receive your favors of the 30th ultimo, with their enclosures. I was much obliged by the accounts from the northern army, though in general they had reached me before; and I flatter myself we shall soon hear that they have been succeeded by other fortunate and interesting events, as the two armies, by General Gates's letter,

[1] On the 28th the main body of the British army were still lying near Germantown, and a detachment, it was reported, had marched into Philadelphia. The whole force of the enemy was estimated at 8,000. The Continental force was thus outlined by Washington in the Council of the 28th: McDougall, with about 900 men had joined the army; Smallwood had also come in with about 1,100 of the Maryland militia; Forman, with about 600 of the Jersey militia was on the Skippack road, and near the main body. The number of Continental troops in camp, fit for duty, exclusive of the detachment under McDougall, and that under Wayne at the Trap, was 5,472, to which was to be added Maxwell's light corps (about 450), and the Pennsylvania militia under Armstrong. Upon the whole the army would consist of about 8,000 Continental troops rank and file. and 3,000 militia. About 2,000 badly equipped militia from Virginia were on their march to camp, a part having already reached Lancaster, and reinforcements had been ordered from Peekskill. The Council decided against an immediate attack on the enemy, and that the army should move to a proper camp about twelve miles from the enemy to await reinforcements and a more fitting opportunity to attack. Smallwood, Wayne, Potter, Irvine, and Scott were of opinion that the American force was of sufficient strength to act offensively; but they were overruled by McDougall, Sullivan, Knox, Greene, Nash, Muhlenberg, Stirling, Conway, Stephen, and Armstrong. General Cadwalader and Joseph Reed were present at the Council.

were encamped near each other.[1] I shall pay due attention to the resolution you refer me to; and no exertions on my part shall be wanting to collect what necessaries I can for the army. This, I am persuaded, will be equally attended to by the honorable Board of War; and I hope, by care and industry, many supplies may be obtained to relieve our distresses, which, in the articles of shoes, stockings, and blankets, are extremely great.[2]

Since my letter of the 29th, no favorable change has taken place in our affairs; on the contrary, we have sustained an additional loss in the capture of the Delaware. She fell into the enemy's hands in a day or two after they were in possession of the city, and in a manner not yet well understood. Some have sup-

[1] "The prosperous complexion of our Northern affairs is a very pleasing and important circumstance. It is much to be wished they may continue in the same train, and have as favorable an issue as they seem now to promise. If they have besides the more immediate advantages that will accrue from the disappointing the views of the enemy in that quarter, it will necessarily have a happy influence upon our affairs here. . . .

"You will have heard before this gets to hand, that the enemy have at length gained possession of Philadelphia. Many unavoidable difficulties and unfortunate accidents that we had to encounter, concurred to promote their success. This is an event that we had reason to wish had not happened, and will be attended with several ill consequences; but I hope it will not be so detrimental as many apprehend, and that a little time and perseverance will give us an opportunity of making amends for our late ill fortune, and putting our affairs in a more flourishing condition than at present. Our army has now had the rest and refreshment it stood in need of, and our men are in very good spirits."—*Washington to Governor Trumbull*, 1 October, 1777.

[2] "The urgent necessity that the stores should be immediately secured forbids our being over-scrupulous in providing the means of doing it. If the civil power will not aid you with energy in getting wagons, you must not want them on that account, but must make a good use of the means you have, and get them at all events. Punctilios, in this emergency, must not hinder our doing whatever is essential to the good of the service."—*Washington to Col. J. Mifflin*, 1 October, 1777.

posed the crew mutinied, while another report is, that she was disabled in her rudder by a shot, and driven on shore. This misfortune takes off the success of Captain Biddle's cruise. I will not dwell longer on the subject.[1] Congress may rest assured, all the means in my power shall be employed to put our affairs in a more agreeable train, and to accomplish the end they so earnestly wish. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Enclosed is a copy of Genl. Howe's Proclamation issued the 28th ult.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, NEAR PENNIBECKER'S MILL,
5 October, 1777.

SIR,

Having received intelligence through two intercepted letters, that General Howe had detached a part of his force for the purpose of reducing Billings-

[1] As soon as the British had taken possession of Philadelphia they erected three batteries near the river to protect the city against such American shipping and craft as might approach the town. On the 26th of September, before the batteries were finished, Commodore Hazelwood, by the advice of a council of officers, ordered two frigates, the *Delaware* and *Montgomery*, each of twenty-four guns, the sloop *Fly*, and several galleys and gondolas, to move up to Philadelphia, and commence a cannonade on the town, should the enemy persist in erecting fortifications. The *Delaware* anchored within five hundred yards of the batteries, and the other vessels took such stations as were suited to their object. At ten o'clock on the morning of the 27th the cannonade began, but on the falling of the tide the *Delaware* grounded. In this disabled condition the guns from the batteries soon compelled her colors to be struck, and she was taken by the enemy. A schooner was likewise driven on shore, but the other frigate and small craft returned to their former station near the fort. The suspicion that the crew mutinied was never confirmed, nor was there any such hint in the British commander's despatch describing the event.—*Commodore Hazelwood's Instructions to Captain Alexander*, September 26.—*Sir William Howe's Letter to Lord George Germaine*, October 10th.—*Sparks*.

port and the forts on Delaware, I communicated the accounts to my general officers, who were unanimously of opinion that a favorable opportunity offered to make an attack upon the troops, which were at and near Germantown. It was accordingly agreed that it should take place yesterday morning, and the following dispositions were made.

The divisions of Sullivan and Wayne, flanked by Conway's brigade, were to enter the town by the way of Chestnut Hill, while General Armstrong with the Pennsylvania militia should fall down the Manatawny road[1] by Vandeering's Mill, and get upon the enemy's left and rear. The divisions of Greene and Stephen, flanked by McDougall's brigade, were to enter, by taking a circuit by way of the Lime-kiln road, at the Market-house, and to attack their right wing; and the militia of Maryland and Jersey, under Generals Smallwood and Forman, were to march by the old York road, and fall upon the rear of their right. Lord Stirling, with Nash's and Maxwell's brigades, was to form a *corps de reserve.*

We marched about seven o'clock the preceding evening, and General Sullivan's advanced party, drawn from Conway's brigade, attacked their picket at Mount Airy, or Mr. Allen's house, about sunrise the next morning, which presently gave way; and his main body, consisting of the right wing, following soon, engaged the light infantry and other troops encamped near the picket, which they forced from their ground. Leaving their baggage, they retreated

[1] Pickering says "the old Egypt or Schuylkill road."

a considerable distance, having previously thrown a party into Mr. Chew's house, who were in a situation not to be easily forced, and had it in their power, from the windows, to give us no small annoyance, and in a great measure to obstruct our advance.

The attack from our left column, under General Greene, began about three quarters of an hour after that from the right, and was for some time equally successful. But I cannot enter upon the particulars of what happened in that quarter, as I am not yet informed of them with sufficient certainty and precision.[1] The morning was extremely foggy, which prevented our improving the advantages we gained, so well as we should otherwise have done. This circumstance, by concealing from us the true situation of the enemy, obliged us to act with more caution and less expedition than we could have wished; and gave the enemy time to recover from the effects of our first impression; and, what was still more unfortunate, it served to keep our different parties in ignorance of each other's movements and hinder their acting in concert. It also occasioned them to mistake one another for the enemy, which I believe more than any thing else contributed to the misfortune that ensued. In the midst of the most promising appearances, when every thing gave the most flattering hopes of victory, the troops began suddenly to retreat, and entirely left the field, in spite of every effort that could be made to rally them.

Upon the whole, it may be said the day was rather

[1] Washington himself was with the right wing.

unfortunate than injurious. We sustained no material loss of men, and brought off all our artillery, except one piece which was dismounted. The enemy are nothing the better by the event; and our troops, who are not in the least dispirited by it, have gained what all young troops gain by being in actions. We have had however several valuable officers killed and wounded, particularly the latter. General Nash is among the wounded, and his life is despaired of. As soon as it is possible to obtain a return of our loss I will transmit it. In justice to General Sullivan and the whole right wing of the army, whose conduct I had an opportunity of observing, as they acted immediately under my eye, I have the pleasure to inform you, that both officers and men behaved with a degree of gallantry that did them the highest honor. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. As I have observed, I have not received a return of our loss; but, from what I have just now learned from General Greene, I fear it is more considerable than I at first apprehended, in men. The cannon, mentioned above, is said to have been brought off in a wagon.

TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, 6 October, 1777.

SIR,

I cannot forbear assuring you, that I am somewhat at a loss to understand the design of your letter of the 3d instant. I can hardly believe you to be serious in

[1] The letter from General Howe, to which this is an answer, was in the following words:

remonstrating against a procedure fully authorized by the common practice of armies, countenanced by your own troops at Trenton, and obviously calculated to answer a purpose very different from that of distressing the inhabitants and increasing the common calamities incident to a state of war. If this is a consequence of it, it is an unavoidable one, and had no part in producing the measure. I flatter myself the public is sufficiently sensible, that it is not my wish nor aim to distress, but to protect the inhabitants, and know how to interpret any thing, that, with respect to individuals, may seem to deviate from this end. Nor will they be easily persuaded to consider it as any injustice or cruelty to them, that my parties should have rendered useless, for a time, a few mills in the neighborhood of your army, which were so situated as to be capable of affording them no inconsiderable advantages.

I am happy to find you express so much sensibility to the sufferings of the inhabitants, as it gives room to hope, that those wanton and unnecessary depredations, which have heretofore, in too many instances,

"Head-Quarters, 3 October, 1777.

"SIR,

"Your parties having destroyed several mills in the adjacent country, which can only distress the peaceable inhabitants residing in their houses, I am constrained from a regard to their sufferings, and a sense of the duty I owe to the public, to forewarn you of the calamities which may ensue, and to express my abhorrence of such a proceeding. At the same time I am inclined to believe, that the outrages already committed have not been in consequence of your orders, and that this early notice will engage you to put an effectual stop to them. If not, I do in the most direct terms disclaim any share in creating the general scene of distress among the inhabitants, which such destruction must inevitably cause. With due respect, I am, &c.

"W. HOWE."

marked the conduct of your army, will be discontinued for the future. The instances I allude to need not be enumerated; your own memory will suggest them to your imagination, from the destruction of Charlestown, in the Massachusetts, down to the more recent burning of mills, barns, and houses at the Head of Elk, and in the vicinity of the Schuylkill. I am, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP, NEAR PENNIBECKER'S MILL, 7 October, 1777.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you on the 5th, I have obtained a return of our loss in the action on Saturday, by which it appears to be much more considerable than I first apprehended, though I always imagined myself that it was greater than it was generally supposed to be. The copy of the return enclosed will show the amount as it now stands; but I hope many of those who are missing will yet come in. I fear however there are several under that denomination to be added to the number of the slain, as the action was warm in every quarter, from the information of the officers who commanded the different attacks. What loss the enemy sustained, I am not

[1] It is interesting to observe, that, in the midst of solemn and important affairs, and the forms of official station, there was room for courtesy and civil acts in small things. The following note was sent on the same day that the above letter was written, and they probably were both forwarded with the same flag.

"General Washington's compliments to General Howe,—does himself the pleasure to return to him a dog, which accidentally fell into his hands, and, by the inscription on the collar, appears to belong to General Howe."

able precisely to ascertain; but from a variety of corresponding accounts of persons, who left the city since, and those of a deserter, it was very considerable. The deserter, who is intelligent, says General Agnew was killed, Sir William Erskine wounded in the head and leg, and that their general loss, in killed and wounded, amounted to near eight hundred. Several reputable persons from the city corroborate this, particularly with respect to General Agnew's death; some say upwards of two hundred wagons with wounded were carried in after the action, and before they came out; and that it was the common belief there, the enemy had been severely handled.

It is with much chagrin and mortification I add, that every account confirms the opinion I first entertained, that our troops retreated at the instant when victory was declaring herself in our favor. The tumult, disorder, and even despair, which, it seems, had taken place in the British army, were scarcely to be paralleled; and it is said, so strongly did the ideas of a retreat prevail, that Chester was fixed on as their rendezvous. I can discover no other cause for not improving this happy opportunity, than the extreme haziness of the weather.[1]

[1] General Washington wrote on the 7th, to Governor Trumbull:—"Having obtained information of the situation of the enemy, we determined to endeavor to do something by way of surprise. We accordingly marched all night, and reached the town by break of day. We attacked them upon two quarters, upon both of which we were successful. But the morning was so exceedingly foggy, that we could not see the confusion the enemy were in, and the advantage we had gained; and, fearing to push too far through a strong village, we retired, after an engagement of two hours, bringing off all our artillery with us. We did not know, till after the affair was over, how near we were to gaining a

My intention is to encamp the army at some suitable place to rest and refresh the men, and recover them from the still remaining effects of that disorder naturally attendant on a retreat. We shall here wait for the reinforcements coming on, and shall then act according to circumstances. General Varnum, with the detachment from Peekskill amounting to about twelve hundred, including officers, would be last night at Coryell's Ferry. About five hundred militia from Virginia, and two hundred from Maryland, together with Colonel Gibson's State regiment consisting of two hundred and twenty-six effectives, have already joined the army. Since the action, General Forman's brigade of Jersey militia has quitted us. The men began to be uneasy at their situation, and desirous to return home; and as, by some intelligence received from General Dickinson, there was reason to imagine there might be a call for their services in the Jerseys, it was thought expedient to gratify their desire.

The state of our water defence on the Delaware is far from being as flattering as could be wished. After some slight opposition from the Jersey militia under General Newcomb, a detachment of the enemy

complete victory; but we have since learnt from deserters and others, who have come out, that preparations were making to retreat to Chester. While the action lasted, it was pretty severe. Our loss will amount, in killed and wounded, to upwards of three hundred." This estimate of the loss was founded on loose returns. In writing to his brother, on the 17th of October, General Washington described the loss as being about one thousand men, in killed, wounded, and missing. General Howe, in his official despatch, stated the American loss to be between two and three hundred killed, about six hundred wounded, and upwards of four hundred taken. This is doubtless an exaggeration.

took possession of Billingsport. This perhaps is an event of no material consequence; but it is to be lamented, that many of the officers and seamen on board the galleys have manifested a disposition that does them little honor. Looking upon their situation as desperate, or probably from worse motives, they have been guilty of the most alarming desertions. Two whole crews, including the officers, have deserted to the enemy. I learn however by Captain Brewer, who is this moment arrived here from the fleet, that the accounts they have received from the city, of our late attack, were such as to have produced a favorable change, and to have inspired them with more confidence. I would here observe, that the charge of bad conduct was by no means applicable to the whole; far from it. He further adds, that four of the enemy's ships made an attempt yesterday morning to weigh the chevaux-de-frise opposite to Billingsport, but were repulsed by our galleys; which has also contributed to raise the spirits of the seamen. Our garrison on Fort Island, consisting of little more than two hundred Continental Troops under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith,[1] appear determined to maintain their post to the last extremity.

[1] On September 23d Washington appointed Baron d'Arendt to the command of Fort Island. "It is of the utmost importance," he wrote, "to prevent the enemy's land forces and fleet from forming a junction, which it is almost morally certain they will attempt by seizing on Fort Island below Philadelphia, if it is possible, and thereby gain the navigation of the Delaware by weighing and removing the chevaux-de-frise, which have been sunk for that purpose. This post (Fort Island), if maintained, will be of the last consequence, and will effectually hinder them from union. . . . The defence is extremely interesting to the United States." Illness prevented the Baron's accepting the appointment, and the command devolved upon Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Smith.

I beg leave to mention to Congress, that there is a great deficiency of general officers in this army. When the detachment coming from Peekskill joins us, we shall have thirteen brigades. These require as many brigadiers, and six major-generals. Instead of these, we shall have only four major-generals and eleven brigadiers; and the deficiency will be still increased by the death of General Nash, which, from every appearance, is momently to be expected. Geneneral Woodford's absence, occasioned by his wound, adds to our embarrassments, though it will be but for a time. Under these circumstances, Congress will be sensible that the government of the army cannot go on with that energy, which is essential to its well-being and success. Neither officers nor men will transfer the respect and obedience they pay to a general officer, to a colonel who happens to be appointed to the temporary command of a brigade; nor will he, knowing his authority to be only temporary, be as solicitous to enforce it, as one who is conscious he is to continue in the station he fills. Want of leisure prevents my being more particular at this time; but I shall take the liberty, in a day or two, to point out the troops that are in want of general officers, with my observations on the subject.

I cannot however omit this opportunity of recommending General McDougall to their notice. This gentleman, from the time of his appointment as brigadier, from his abilities, military knowledge, and approved bravery, has every claim to promotion. If I mistake not, he was passed over in the last appoint-

ments of major-generals, and younger officers preferred before him; but his disinterested attachment to the service prevented his acting in the manner, that is customary in like circumstances. This, I think, gives him a peculiar title to esteem, and concurs with the opinion I have of his value as an officer, to make me wish it may appear advisable to Congress to promote him to one of the vacancies. It would be well the intended inquiry into the conduct of General St. Clair could be brought to a speedy issue; and, if he is acquitted to the satisfaction of Congress, that, as his general character as an officer is good, he may be again restored to the service.

By a letter this evening received from Colonel Hawkes Hay of Haverstraw, dated the 5th, at four o'clock in the afternoon, four ships of war, a considerable number of armed vessels, eight transports, and forty flat-bottomed boats, arrived that morning in the bay opposite that place, and were landing troops at Verplanck's Point. Their number and design were not known. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Enclosed you will find a copy of a letter from Colo. Mifflin containing an account of the action of the 4th as mentioned by the British officers in Philadelphia. I would beg leave to observe that I think Miss Leonard's name should not be mentioned.[1]

[1] "We shall have a large reinforcement from the Northward and Southward in a day, or two, and you may assure the officers of the Army and Navy that no time shall be lost in following our Blow effectually and thereby giving relief to all our posts. I think this may be so much sooner effected by keeping our whole force together and acting powerfully with them, that I shall pursue that Course rather than detach a part to operate against their detachments. For you must be very sensible that if their Main Body is defeated their small parties

TO COLONEL CHRISTOPHER GREENE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

I have directed General Varnum to send your regiment and that of Colonel Angell to Red Bank, by a rout which has been marked out to him. The command of that detachment will of course devolve upon you, with which you will proceed with all expedition, and throw yourself into that place. When you arrive there, you will immediately communicate your arrival to Col: Smith, commander of the Garrison at Fort Mifflin, and Commodore Hazelwood, commander of the fleet in the river.[1] You are to coöperate with them in every measure necessary for the defence of the obstructions in the river, and to counteract every attempt the enemy may make for their removal. You will find a very good fortification at Red Bank; but if any thing should be requisite to render it stronger, or proportion it to the size of your garrison, you will have it done. The cannon you will stand in need of, as much as can be spared, will be furnished from the Galleys and Fort Mifflin, from whence also you will derive supplies of military stores. * * *

I have sent Captain Duplessis,[2] with some officers and men, to take the immediate direction of the Artillery, for your garrison. He is also to superintend any works that may be wanted. If there should be any deficiency of men for the artillery, the security of the garrison will require you to assist him with a few additionals from your detachment. You should lose not a moment's time in getting to the place of your destination, and making every proper preparation for its defence. Any delay might give the enemy an

must fall of course. I beg you will communicate this letter to the Gentlemen of the Navy and let them see how much depends upon their brave opposition to the last moment."—*Washington to Lieutenant-Colonel Smith*, 7 October, 1777.

[1] Commodore Hazelwood acted under a commission from Pennsylvania, and originally commanded only the armed vessels belonging to that State. But the Continental shipping in the Delaware was now likewise put under his command. This caused some uneasiness on the part of the Continental navy officers, and occasional want of harmony.

[2] A young French officer of great merit, appointed by Congress a captain of artillery in the American service.

opportunity of getting there before you, which could not fail being of the most fatal consequence. If in the progress of your march, you should fall in with any detachment of the enemy, bending towards the same object, and likely to gain it before you, and from intelligence should have reason to think yourself equal to the task, you will by all means attack them, and endeavor by that mean to disappoint their design. I have written to General Newcomb, of the Jersey militia, to give you all the aid in his power, for which you will accordingly apply when necessary.

Upon the whole, Sir, you will be pleased to remember, that the post with which you are now intrusted is of the utmost importance to America, and demands every exertion you are capable of for its security and defence. The whole defence of the Delaware absolutely depends upon it, and consequently all the enemy's hopes of keeping Philadelphia, and finally succeeding in the object of the present campaign. Influenced by these considerations, I doubt not your regard to the service, and your own reputation, will prompt you to every possible effort to accomplish the important end of your trust, and frustrate the intentions of the enemy. Given at Head-Quarters, this 7th day of October, 1777.[1]

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 8 October, 1777.

SIR,

I yesterday received certain intelligence, that the enemy had proceeded up Hudson's River from New York, and landed a body of men at Verplanck's Point, a few miles below Peekskill. This movement fully explains those appearances, which lately induced General Dickinson to apprehend a second incursion into

[1] "The situation of the army frequently not admitting of the regular performance of divine service on Sundays, the chaplains of the army are forthwith to meet together and agree on some method of performing it at other times, which method they will make known to the Commander-in-chief."—*Orderly Book*, 7 October, 1777.

the Jerseys; and gives reason to believe, that, instead of that, the enemy meditate a serious blow against our posts in the Highlands. This circumstance is somewhat alarming, as the situation of our affairs this way has obliged us to draw off so large a part of our force from Peekskill, that what now remains there may perhaps prove inadequate to the defence of it. Should any disaster happen, it is easy to foresee the most unhappy consequences. The loss of the Highland passes would be likely to involve the reduction of the forts. This would open the navigation of the river, and enable the enemy with facility to throw their force into Albany, get into the rear of General Gates, and either oblige him to retreat, or put him between two fires. The success of the present attempt upon Peekskill may, in its consequences, entirely change the face of our northern affairs, and throw them into a very disagreeable and unfavorable train.

I am confident, that no arguments need be used to dispose you to contribute every effort in your power, to obviate an evil of so great magnitude; and as I do not conceive, there can be now any danger of your militia being wanted at home, for the internal security of your State, I am persuaded you will readily consent to my request, that as large a part of them, as can be prevailed upon to go, may immediately march with all expedition to the aid of General Putnam. At this distance, unacquainted with what may have taken place, I cannot give any particular directions to regulate their march; they must govern

themselves by circumstances, and act according to the intelligence and orders they may receive from General Putnam.

In order to this, if you should think it proper to send a body agreeable to my request, it would be adviseable that the officer under whose command they go, should without delay advise General Putnam of his intended approach and desire his instructions how to proceed. In the mean time this rout must be directed towards the Clove and thence towards the New Windsor.

I shall be happy if your views and mine concur in this matter, and that you may be able to afford any material succor to a post the fate of which is of such essential importance to the prosperity of our northern concerns, as in a great measure to threaten their ruin if it should be lost, and the disappointment of all those flattering prospects which our late successes in that quarter have afforded us.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL POTTER.[1]

9 October, 1777.

DR. SIR,

A Person of the name of Patterson (an Inhabitant of Wilmington) can give you a particular acct. of the Situation, strength, &c. of the Enemy at that place; from whence you may judge of the practica-

[1] General Potter was ordered across the Schuylkill, with a force of about 600 militia, to interrupt the enemy's intercourse between Philadelphia and Chester, cutting off the convoys, and intercepting the despatches passing between the army and their shipping; and "in a word, to give them all the annoyance and disturbance he can."

bility of attempting something by way of surprize (if your numbers are adequate) upon the Garrison— After having made every necessary enquiry proper for an enterprize of this kind let me know the result by an officer and whether the undertaking is feasable with, or without a little aid from hence.

Your enquiries into these matters should be made with much circumspection, to avoid giving alarm.— and your manœuvers should be towards the Enemy and retrograde occasionally to lull them into security, unless your own strength is sufficient to effect the work, in that case the rapidity of the attempt may perhaps contribute to the success of it—

You will readily perceive that nothing herein, is positive, but altogether discretionary; to be undertaken or not, as circumstances and Information shall warrant.—If a successful blow could be aim'd at Wilmington, very happy consequences would result from it, besides possessing ourselves of the wounded that now are there for the purpose of exchanging any for such Prisoners of ours as are in the Enemy's hands—but in the midst of this it is not to be forgotten, that one great object of your expedition is to deprive the Enemy of supplies from Chester County and to Interrupt their Convoys from Chester Town Wilmington, &c. whilst our defence upon the River, obliges them to have recourse to a transportation of necessaries by Land from their shipping.—Watch the Communication between Phild. and the Enemy's shipping well, and let me hear from you frequently, especially on the subject of the proposed Expedition.

—Patterson can point out others to you (Inhabitants of Wilmington) who he thinks would give every aid in their power; but then danger may attend the Comn. of the scheme to too many.—If an Idea was thrown out that the corp you commanded consisted of the Eastern Shore Militia returning, it might possibly remove suspicion of the real design (if it should be found practicable to make an attempt upon the Enemy at Wilmington) with your Troops.

I have, &c.[1]

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SAMUEL SMITH.

SKIPPACK CAMP, 11 October, 1777.

SIR,

I rec'd yours of the 9th, informing me of the occasion of the late firing. I imagine the enemy still persist in their attempt, as the firing has continued by intervals ever since.[2] As the rear of the fort is only defended by a picket work, I think you ought to lose no time in throwing up a Bank against the

[1] "Promotions in consequence of the late deaths and resignations will now take place as a reward to the merit of deserving officers. . . . Officers who are under the imputation of *cowardice*, or whose characters in other respects are impeachable, are to be noted; as the General is determined to discriminate between the good and bad. This order is to be confined to promotion. No new appointments will take place at this time owing to the weak state of the regiments."—*Orderly Book*, 10 October, 1777.

[2] The enemy erected a battery, on the 9th of September, at the mouth of the Schuylkill, to secure the passage at Webb's Ferry. Commodore Hazelwood sent several galleys to attack the battery, which was silenced in a short time. In the night of the 10th the enemy crossed Webb's Ferry and erected a redoubt opposite the fort, within two musket-shots of the blockhouse. As soon as the redoubt was discovered in the morning, the Commodore despatched three galleys and a floating battery to attack it; which was so well executed, that one lieutenant, one ensign, and fifty-six privates were compelled to sur-

picket, which would strengthen it and make it defensible against shot. If some blinds were thrown up, within the area of the fort, they wou'd be a security against shells, of which I think you are in more danger than from shot. You seem apprehensive, if the enemy possess province Island, that your men must quit their barracks. In that case you should think of finding out some more secure place of sheltering them. I cannot at present think of any place better than between the east face of the Stone Fort and the lower battery; they will at least be safe there until an attack begins from the water. I desired Captain Brewer, who went from hence yesterday, to caution the Commodore against an unnecessary expenditure of ammunition, and beg that you will also be careful in that point; for should the enemy cut off your intercourse with us, you will find the want of it. I am, &c.

P. S. Should the Enemy get Possession of the ground near the Pest House, what effect wou'd their fire have upon Shipping? If this ground would be

render themselves prisoners of war.—*Haselwood's MS. Letter*, October 11th. Before leaving this, Washington proposed to lay the country under water by cutting the meadow banks.

In speaking of the probability that the enemy would bring their cannon to bear upon the fort from the opposite shore, Colonel Smith wrote: "I shall in that case be obliged to cover my men; and should they keep up their fire in the night, it will compel us to sleep in the open air, which will soon destroy my small party. I have already sent away six men and one officer sick. Besides this, we have seven more in garrison unfit for duty; however, if they keep their men in the marshes two or three days, they must in this weather become equally sickly. From the number of the enemy we saw on the shore, I am of the opinion that they have at least seven hundred and fifty men, perhaps a thousand. I have now two hundred effective men in garrison. The number of wounded in last Saturday's engagement [at Germantown], by every account we can get from the city, exceeds twelve hundred."—*MS. Letter*, October 9th.

advantageous to us, do you think part of your garrison, part of that intended for Red Bank, and some militia from Jersey could possess and defend it? It is my wish that Colo. Greene and you, in concert with the gentln. of the navy, would turn your attention to every place, which will contribute to the defence of the water obstructions, and, if it is in my power to afford assistance, I will do it. * * *

TO GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 15 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I was this day honored with yours of the 9th, containing a full account of the storm of Forts Montgomery and Clinton. General Putnam had given me information of the loss two days before, but not in so full and ample a manner. It is to be regretted that so brave a resistance did not meet with a suitable reward. You have however the satisfaction of knowing, that every thing was done, that could possibly be done by a handful against a far superior force. This I am convinced was the case. This affair might have been attended with fatal consequences, had not there been a most providential intervention in favor of General Gates's arms on the 7th instant; but I am fully of opinion, that Sir Henry Clinton will not advance much farther up the river, upon hearing of Burgoyne's defeat and retreat. Nothing but absolute necessity could have induced me to withdraw any further part of the troops allotted

for the defence of the posts up the North River; but such was the reduced state of our Continental regiments, after the battle of Brandywine, and such the slowth and difficulty of procuring reinforcements of militia from the southward, that without the troops from Peekskill we should scarcely have been able to keep the field against General Howe. I had the greatest hopes, that General Putnam would draw in as many Connecticut militia, as would replace the Continental troops, and I make no doubt but he did all in his power to obtain them in time. I am sorry that you were under the necessity of destroying the frigates. The only consolation is, that if we had not done it ourselves, the enemy would either have done it for us, or have carried them down for their own use.

Since the battle of Germantown, upon the 4th instant, the two armies have remained in a manner quiet. The enemy have made several attempts to remove the obstructions in the Delaware, but hitherto without effect. They are now making preparations to raise batteries in the rear of Fort Mifflin, which commands the uppermost chevaux-de-frise. If we can maintain that post, and one opposite upon the Jersey shore, I am in hopes our ships, galleys, and floating batteries will be able to keep their stations and repel any force, that can be brought by water directly in front. I most earnestly expect further news from the northward, which I hope will bring us accounts of the total ruin of Burgoyne's army.

It is not unlikely that one of Sir Henry Clinton's objects will be to destroy the boats and small craft in

the North River. Should this be the case, and he succeed, I think it will be advisable for you to set a number of workmen to building flat-bottomed boats at some secure places within three or four miles of the water, from which they may be easily hauled. They are so exceedingly useful, and so frequently wanted, that I think the business cannot, in such case, be too soon begun or carried on with too much expedition. I have written to General Putnam upon the same subject. I am, dear Sir, &c.

P. S. By sundry concurring accounts of persons out of Philadelphia and from Deserters, the Enemy's loss in the action of the 4th was very considerable. The lowest say it was 1500 killed and wounded, others 2000, and some as high as 2500. Perhaps the two last are exaggerated, but there are many reasons to believe that the first cannot much exceed the mark. For they were compleatly surprized and drove in great disorder for a long time and for a considerable distance at every point of attack. Had it not been for the extreme fogginess of the day which prevented our several Columns discovering each others movements and from improving the advantages which they separately gained, in all probability the day would have been a most fortunate one—But owing to that circumstance they got confused and retreated at a moment when there was every appearance of victory in our favor. The Enemy lost some valuable officers, among the slain Genl. Agnew and it is said another Genl. officer was dangerously wounded. We are not without [ ] on our

part Brigadr. Nash was wounded by a Cannon Ball and is since dead. We had also several other officers of inferior rank wounded and some killed—This crude undigested account I dont mean for publication. I hope all will yet end well.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, AT PETER WINTZ'S,
16 October, 1777.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favors of the 12th & 13th inst. with their several Enclosures.

In respect to the resolution, directing a flag to be sent to General Howe, I am inclined to think, that the information upon which it was framed was without foundation. The letters, which have come from our officers, who have been lately taken, generally mention that their treatment has been tolerably good; and such privates as have escaped have said nothing, in the course of their examination, of their having been compelled to work. For these reasons I have taken the liberty to decline sending the flag.[1] At the same time Congress may be assured, if our prisoners suffer any wrongs, I shall take every means in my power to have them redressed as soon as I am apprized of them.

It is with the highest satisfaction I congratulate Congress on the success of our arms at the north-

[1] Information had at different times been conveyed to Congress, that the prisoners in Philadelphia were compelled to labor, and were employed in throwing up works in the neighborhood of the city. Congress thought it incumbent on them to inquire into the truth of the report, and directed that a flag should be immediately despatched to General Howe for that purpose.—*President Hancock's Letter*, October 12th.

ward in the action of the 7th, an event of the most interesting importance at this critical juncture. From the happy train in which things then were, I hope we shall soon hear of the most decisive advantages.[1] We moved this morning from the encampment at which we had been for six or seven days past, and are just arrived at the grounds we occupied before the action of the 4th. One motive for coming here is to divert the enemy's attention and force from the forts. These they seem to consider as capital objects, and, from their operations, mean to reduce if possible. At present their designs are directed against Fort Mifflin and the chevaux-de-frise. I have therefore detached a further reinforcement to the garrison.

I yesterday, through the hands of Mrs. Ferguson of Graham Park, received a letter of a very curious and extraordinary nature from Mr. Duché, which I have thought proper to transmit to Congress. To

[1] "The General congratulates the troops upon this signal victory, the third capital advantage, which under divine Providence, we have gained in that quarter; and hopes it will prove a powerful stimulus to the army under his immediate command; at least to equal their northern brethren in brave and intrepid exertions when called thereto. The General wishes them to consider that this is the Grand American Army; and that of course great things are expected from it. 'T is the army of whose superior prowess some have boasted. What shame then and dishonor will attend us, if we suffer ourselves in every instance to be out-done? We have a force sufficient, by the favor of Heaven to crush our foe, and nothing is wanting but a spirited, persevering exertion of it, to which, besides the motives before mentioned, duty and the love of our country irresistibly impel us. The effect of such powerful motives, no man, who possesses the spirit of a soldier can withstand, and spurred on by them, the General assures himself, that on the next occasion his troops will be completely successful."—*Orderly Book*, 15 October, 1777. "The General has his happiness completed relative to the successes of our northern army . . . Let every face brighten, and every heart expand with grateful joy and praise to the Supreme Disposer of all events, who has granted us this signal success."—*Orderly Book*, 18 October, 1777.

this ridiculous, illiberal performance, I made a short reply, by desiring the bearer of it, if she should hereafter by any accident meet with Mr. Duché, to tell him I should have returned it unopened, if I had had any idea of the contents; observing at the same time, that I highly disapproved the intercourse she seemed to have been carrying on, and expected it would be discontinued. Notwithstanding the author's assertion, I cannot but suspect that the measure did not originate with him; and that he was induced to it by the hope of establishing his interest and peace more effectually with the enemy.[1]

I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] This letter "contained in substance, an abjuration of all his former opinions, but severe and illiberal animadversions on Congress, and the leaders in the cause of freedom, censuring alike their motives and conduct. Washington, he said, was the only person who had power to stop the current, which was fast hurrying the country to inevitable ruin; and on him he called, in the voice of entreaty and almost of admonition, to 'represent to Congress the indispensable necessity of rescinding the hasty and ill-advised Declaration of Independency.'"—*Sparks*. Washington merely enclosed the letter to Congress, where many copies were taken. "I never intended to make the letter more public than by laying it before Congress. I thought this a duty, which I owed to myself; for, had any accident happened to the army entrusted to my command, and it had ever afterwards appeared that such a letter had been written to and received by me, might it not have been said, that I had betrayed my country? and would not such a correspondence, if kept a secret, have given good grounds for the suspicion?"—*Washington to Francis Hopkinson*, 21 November, 1777. More than five years later Duché, in seeking to pave a way for his return to America, gave an explanation of his conduct:—

"Will your Excellency condescend to accept of a few lines from one, who ever was and wishes still to be your sincere friend, who never *intentionally* sought to give you a moment's pain, who entertains for you the highest personal respect, and would be happy to be assured under your own hand, that he does not labor under your displeasure, but that you freely forgive what a weak judgment, but a very affectionate heart, once presumed to advise? Many circumstances, at present unknown to you, conspired to make me deem it my duty to write to you. Ignorance and simplicity saw not the necessity of your divulging the letter. I am convinced, however, that you could not, in your public position, do otherwise. I cannot say a word in vindication of my con-

TO THOMAS WHARTON, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 17 October, 1777.

SIR,

As the term of service of great numbers of the militia of this State, who were called out some time ago, has expired, and their places have been by no means punctually filled up by succeeding classes, I am constrained to call upon you, in the most pressing manner, to exert the powers of government, not only to keep up the number of four thousand men demanded by Congress, but of a much greater number,

duct but this, that I had been for months before distressed with continual apprehensions for you and all my friends without the British lines. I looked upon all as gone; or that nothing could save you, but rescinding the Declaration of Independency. Upon this ground alone I presumed to speak; not to advise an act of base treachery, my soul would have recoiled from the thought; not to surrender your army, or betray the righteous cause of your country, but, at the head of that army, *supporting and supported by them*, to negotiate with Britain for our constitutional rights.

"Can you then join with my country in pardoning this error of judgment? Will you yet honor me with your great interest and influence, by recommending, at least expressing your approbation of the repeal of an act, that keeps me in a state of banishment from my native country, from the arms of a dear aged father, and the embraces of a numerous circle of valuable and long-loved friends? Your liberal, generous mind, I am persuaded, will never exclude me wholly from your regard for a mere political error; especially, as you must have heard, that, since the date of that letter, I have led a life of perfect retirement, and since my arrival in England have devoted myself wholly to the duties of my profession, and confined my acquaintance to a happy circle of literary and religious friends."—*Duché to Washington*, 2 April, 1783. He returned to America in May, 1792, and "lodged for a few weeks at my house, with his family. During their being with me, there took place the interesting incident of his visit to President Washington; who had been apprised of and consented to it; and manifested generous sensibility, on observing, on the limbs of Mr. Duché, the effects of a slight stroke of paralysis."—Wilson, *Memoir of Bishop White*.

Duché's letter was printed in Rivington's *Gazette*, 29 November, 1777, and, with the reply of Col. Parke, was included in the Rivington issue of the "forged letters" of Washington, printed in Vol. IV. of this collection. A letter to the Doctor from his brother-in-law, Francis Hopkinson, may be found in Sparks, *Writings of Washington*, v., 477. Duché died in March, 1797.

if they can possibly be armed and accoutred. When the capital of your State is in the enemy's hands, and when they can only be dislodged from thence by a powerful reinforcement of militia, in aid of Continental troops, there should not be a moment's hesitation, whether one or two classes should be commanded to appear; but at least one half of the men, capable to bear arms, should be called into the field. By exertions of this kind, New York, though sorely oppressed by our avowed enemies, and more so by our internal foes, has made a noble resistance; and New Jersey has kept the enemy out of her limits, (except now and then a hasty descent,) without a Continental regiment. Besides doing this, she has sent and is now sending reinforcements to this and the northern army. It will be no great while, before the militia from Maryland and Virginia will have performed their tour of duty; and from the distance, which most of them have to travel before they reach the army, I cannot expect much more assistance from those quarters, in the course of the remaining part of this campaign.

I assure you, Sir, it is matter of astonishment to every part of the continent, to hear that Pennsylvania, the most opulent and populous of all the States, has but twelve hundred militia in the field, at a time when the enemy are endeavoring to make themselves completely masters of, and to fix their winter quarters in, her capital. Without the free navigation of Delaware I am confident, that General Howe will never remain in Philadelphia, and I am as confident, that, had I a

sufficient force to afford as much assistance to the forts upon the Delaware as their importance deserves, he would not be able to possess them. I have spared as many of the Continental troops as I possibly can, without endangering the safety of this army, and I shall still continue to afford every further relief in my power. From this state of facts, I hope that you will not lose a moment, in calling upon and endeavoring to rouse the people of this province to a manly and effectual opposition; and I know of no means so likely to answer, as not to confine the demand to any particular number, but to call upon every man to come forth. The county lieutenants should be particularly careful to see, that all those, who have arms and accoutrements of their own, bring them out; for they have a very mistaken notion, that there are full supplies in the Continental stores. Many even come out without blankets, expecting to find them.

There is another matter, which I beg leave to recommend to the serious consideration of the legislature of your State; that is, the falling upon some mode of completing and keeping up the quota of your Continental regiments. Upon an average, your battalions have never been above one third full; and now many of them are far below even that. From the extravagant prices given to substitutes in the militia, in the different States, it has become impossible to recruit men upon the bounty allowed by Congress. The New England States and Virginia have begun to adopt the mode of drafting, and, I am informed, they have succeeded very well. I am con-

vinced, that this will be found the only method of raising Continental troops; and, if the measure was to become general throughout the States, it would not be deemed a hardship. I mention this matter to you at this time, in the hope that you will as soon as possible fall upon this, or some other mode, to recruit your regiments in the course of this fall and winter; and, as it is more than probable, that our opposition will not end with this campaign, we ought to endeavor to have a respectable army in the field in the spring, before the enemy can receive further reinforcements from Europe. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

DEAR SIR, MATUCHEN HILL, 17 October, 1777.

Your favor of the 5th instant, as also that of the 11th by Baron de Kalb, are both at hand. It is not in my power at present to answer your query respect-

[1] "It is my earnest request that you immediately collect all the men you possibly can, and send them on as fast as any considerable number can be got together, under good officers, to join this army. As you will remain to march with the last detachment, I wish you to use all your influence and interest with your legislative body, that they may give you all the assistance they can in the completion of this necessary object. You can urge with great justice that as long as Genl. Howe's army has an existence, the adjacent counties will eternally be subject to depredations, nor can any thing prevent it, but such a union and co-operation of the people as will effectually reduce him; to attain which happy end, a better opportunity than the present never presented itself . . . Another reason occurs why it is the true interest of your state to give us every aid upon the present occasion, which is, that if the enemy can once bring up their shipping and get the city secured and fortified for winter quarters, it will be so much in their power to make constant incursions into the Jerseys, that you will be either obliged to submit to repeated heavy losses by being between two fires, or keep your militia on foot thro' the severity of the winter."—*Washington to General Forman*, 16 October, 1777.

ing the appointment of this gentleman. But, Sir, if there is any truth in a report, which has been handed to me, vizt: that Congress hath appointed, or as others say are about to appoint, Brigadier Conway a major-general in this army, it will be as unfortunate a measure as ever was adopted. I may add, (and I think with truth,) that it will give a fatal blow to the existence of the army. Upon so interesting a subject, I must speak plain. The duty I owe my country, the ardent desire I have to promote its true interests, and justice to individuals, requires this of me. General Conway's merit, then, as an officer, and his importance in this army, exists more in his imagination, than in reality. For it is a maxim with him, to leave no service of his own untold, nor to want any thing, which is to be obtained by importunity.

But as I do not mean to detract from him any merit he possesses, and only wish to have the matter taken up upon its true ground, after allowing him every thing that his warmest friends will contend for, I would ask, why the youngest brigadier in the service (for I believe he is so) should be put over the heads of all the eldest, and thereby take rank and command gentlemen, who but yesterday were his seniors; gentlemen, who, I will be bold to say, (in behalf of some of them at least,) are of sound judgment and unquestionable bravery? If there was a degree of conspicuous merit in General Conway, unpossessed by any of his seniors, the confusion, which might be occasioned by it, would stand warranted upon the principles of sound policy; for I do readily agree, that this is no time for trifling; but, at the same time that I cannot

subscribe to the fact, this truth I am very well assured of (though I have not directly, nor indirectly, exchanged a word with any one of the brigadiers on the subject, nor am I certain that any one of them has heard of the appointment), that they will not serve under him. I leave you to guess, therefore, at the situation this army would be in at so important a crisis, if this event should take place. These gentlemen have feelings as officers; and though they do not dispute the authority of Congress to make appointments, they will judge of the propriety of acting under them.

In a word, the service is so difficult, and every necessary so expensive, that almost all our officers are tired out. Do not, therefore, afford them good pretexts for retiring. No day passes over my head without application for leave to resign. Within the last six days, I am certain, twenty commissions at least have been tendered to me. I must, therefore, conjure you to conjure Congress to consider this matter well, and not, by a real act of injustice, compel some good officers to leave the service, and thereby incur a train of evils unforeseen and irremediable. To sum up the whole, I have been a slave to the service; I have undergone more than most men are aware of, to harmonize so many discordant parts; but it will be impossible for me to be of any further service, if such insuperable difficulties are thrown in my way. You may believe me, my good Sir, that I have no earthly views, but the public good, in what I have said. I have no prejudice against General Conway, nor desire to serve any other brig-

adier, further than I think the cause will be benefited by it; to bring which to a speedy and happy conclusion, is the most fervent wish of my soul.[1]

With respect to the wants of the militia, in the

[1] Mr. Lee replied: "I was a good deal surprised to find you had been told Congress had appointed General Conway a major-general. No such appointment has been made, nor do I believe it will, whilst it is likely to produce the evil consequences you suggest. It is very true, that, both within and without doors, there have been advocates for the measure, and it has been affirmed, that it would be very agreeable to the army, whose favorite Mr. Conway was asserted to be. My judgment on this business was not formed until I received your letter. I am very sure Congress would not take any step that might injure the army, or even have a tendency that way; and I verily believe they wish to lessen your difficulties by every means in their power, from an entire conviction that the purest motives of public good direct your actions.

"The business of a Board of War is so extensive, so important, and demanding such constant attention, that Congress see clearly the necessity of constituting a new board, out of Congress, whose time shall be entirely devoted to that essential department. It is by some warmly proposed, that this board shall be filled by the three following gentlemen, Colonel Reed, Colonel Pickering, the present adjutant-general, and Colonel Harrison, your secretary; and that General Conway be appointed adjutant-general in the room of Colonel Pickering. It is my wish, and I am sure it is so of many others, to know your full and candid sentiments on the subject. For my own part, I cannot be satisfied with giving my opinion on the point, until I am favored with your sentiments, which I shall be much obliged to you for, Sir, as soon as your time will permit.

"It has been affirmed, that General Conway would quit the service, if he were not made a major-general. But I have been told in confidence, that he would leave it at the end of this campaign if he *was* appointed, unless his word of honor were taken to continue for any fixed time. And it is a question with me, whether the advocates for General Conway will not miss their aim, if he should be appointed adjutant-general, unless he has the rank of major-general also. My reason for thinking so is, that I have been informed General Conway desires to retire to his family, provided he can carry from this country home with him a rank that will raise him in France. It is very certain that the public good demands a speedy erecting and the judicious filling of the new Board of War, and I sincerely wish it may be done in the most proper manner. I do not imagine Congress would appoint Colonel Harrison, without first knowing whether you could spare him; nor do I think that so important an office, as that of adjutant-general, should be touched without the maturest consideration."—*MS. Letter*, October 20th.

Notwithstanding the strong representations of General Washington in the

articles of clothing, you must be well convinced, that it is not in my power to supply them in the smallest degree, when near one half of our own men are rendered unfit for service for want of these things. I can add no more at present, than that I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BARON D'ARENDT.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 18 October, 1777.

SIR,

Being recovered from the indisposition under which you lately labored, you are to proceed immediately to Fort Mifflin on Mud Island and to take the command of the troops there, and those which may be sent. I shall not prescribe any particular line for your conduct, because I repose the utmost confidence in your bravery, knowledge, and judgment; and because the mode of defence must depend on a variety of circumstances, which will be best known to those, who are on the spot. I will add, that the maintenance of this post is of the last importance to the States of America, and that preventing the enemy from obtaining possession of it, under the smiles of Heaven, will be the means of our defeating the army to which we are now opposed; or of obliging them disgracefully to abandon the city of Philadelphia, which is now in their hands.

I have detached to-day a further reinforcement to the garrison,[1] and have instructed Colonel Greene, who commands at Red

above letter to Mr. Lee, and the decided opinions expressed in Mr. Lee's reply, General Conway was appointed by Congress a few weeks afterwards inspector-general of the army, and raised to the rank of major-general over several older brigadier-generals.—*Journals*, December 13th.

[1] Lieutenant-Colonel John Green of Virginia, with a detachment of two hundred men. Col. Angell and his regiment had been ordered to Red Bank on the 16th. "As there seems to be a doubt of the priority of the date of your or Lieutenant-Colonel Green's commissions, I have in a letter of this date desired him to wave the matter in dispute for the present, and act under your command, as you have been in the fort from the beginning, and must be better acquainted with the nature of the defences than a stranger."—*Washington to Lieutenant-Colonel Smith*, 28 October, 1777.

Bank, to coöperate with you, and to render you every assistance in his power. You will maintain with him, and with Commodore Hazelwood, who commands our fleet, a good understanding and the strictest harmony. These will be essential; and, mutually aiding each other, I shall look forward for the most happy events. You will be particularly attentive to the state of your ammunition and provision, advising me of the same from time to time, and of such supplies as you may judge necessary to be sent to you. You will also report to me the situation of the garrison, as often as it shall be requisite, and will not fail to transmit me frequent and the most early intelligence of every important occurrence. I shall be done after recommending your utmost despatch to arrive at the garrison; and you have my warmest wishes, that the command may prove honorable to yourself and beneficial to America. I am, &c.[1]

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, 18 October, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,

Your kind and affectionate Letters of the 21st of Septr. & 2d Inst. came safe to hand.

When my last to you was dated I know not; for truly I can say, that my whole time is so much engrossed, that I have scarcely a moment, but sleeping

[1] "Your letter of the 18th instant I received last night, wherein I find you express a desire to be recalled from Fort Mifflin to join your corps. I found it absolutely necessary to reinforce your garrison, and that it was impracticable to do it consistently, without superseding you. This determined me to send the Baron d'Arendt, as the person originally mentioned to you to command there; but I would have omitted it, (after you had remained some time in command,) had not the additional detachment been judged expedient for the defence of so important a post. This I mention, that you may be satisfied of the real motives in this transaction, and that a desire to supersede you had no influence in it; but on the contrary, your conduct and exertions, since the commencement of your command there, have been such as merit my approbation and thanks. I now leave it to your own option, whether to rejoin your corps, or continue where you are; and have no doubt but you will determine upon that which, in your opinion, is most serviceable and consistent with the character of an officer."—*Washington to Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Smith*, 22 October, 1777.

ones, for relaxation, or to indulge myself in writing to a friend. The anxiety you have been under, on acct of this army, I can easily conceive. Would to God there had been less cause for it; or that our situation at present was such as to promise much from it. The Enemy crossed the Schuylkill which, by the by, above the Falls (& the Falls you know is only five miles from the city) is as easily crossed in any place as Potomac Run, Aquia, or any other broad & shallow water, rather by stratagem; tho I do not know, that it was in our power to prevent it, as their manœuvres made it necessary for us to attend to our Stores, which lay at Reading, towards which they seemed bending their course, and the loss of which must have proved our Ruin. After they had crossed, we took the first favorable opportunity of attacking them.

This was attempted by a night's march of fourteen miles to surprise them, which we effectually did, so far as to reach their guards before they had notice of our coming; and but for a thick Fog, which rendered so infinitely dark at times as not to distinguish friend from Foe at the distance of thirty yards, we should, I believe, have made a decisive and glorious day of it. But Providence or some unaccountable something designed it otherwise; for after we had driven the Enemy a mile or two, after they were in the utmost confusion and flying before us in most places, after we were upon the point, (as it appeared to every body,) of grasping a compleat victory, our own troops took fright and fled with precipitation and disorder. How to acct for this, I know not; unless, as I before

observed, the Fog represented their own Friends to them for a Reinforcement of the Enemy, as we attacked in different Quarters at the same time, and were about closing the wings of our army when this happened. One thing, indeed, contributed not a little to our misfortune, and that was want of ammunition on the right wing, which began the Engagement, and in the course of two hours and forty minutes, which time it lasted, had, (many of them,) expended the forty Rounds, that they took into the Field. After the Engagement we removed to a place about twenty miles from the Enemy, to collect our Forces together, to take care of our wounded, get furnished with necessaries again, and be in a better posture, either for offensive or defensive operations. We are now advancing towards the Enemy again, being at this time within twelve miles of them.

Our loss in the late action was, in killed, wounded, and missing, about one thousand men, but of the missing, many, I dare say, took advantage of the times, and deserted. Genl. Nash of No. Carolina was wounded, and died two or three days after. Many valuable officers of ours was also wounded, and some killed. The Enemy's loss is variously reported—none make it less than 1500 (killed & wounded) & many estimate it much larger. Genl. Agnew of theirs was certainly killed—many officers wounded among whom some of distinction. This we certainly know, that the Hospital at Philadelphia & several large Meeting Houses, are filled with their wounded besides private Houses with the Horses. In a word,

it was a bloody day. Would to Heaven I could add, that it had been a more fortunate one for us.

Our distress on acct. of Cloathing is great, and in a little time must be very sensibly felt, unless some expedient can be hit upon to obtain them. We have since the Battle got in abt. 1200 Militia from Virginia—about the same number have gone off from this State and Jersey but others are promised in lieu of them—with truth however it may be said, that this State acts most infamously, the People of it, I mean, as we derive little or no assistance, from them. In short they are, in a manner, totally, disaffected, or in a kind of Lethargy.

The Enemy are making vigorous efforts to remove the obstructions in the Delaware, and to possess themselves of the Works which have been constructed for the Defence of them.—I am doing all I can in my present situation to save them, God only knows which will succeed.

I very sincerely congratulate you on the change in your Family. Tell the young couple, after wishing them joy of their union, that it is my sincere hope, that it will be as happy and lasting as their present joys are boundless. The Enclosed Letter of thanks to my sister for her elegant present you will please to deliver; and, with sincere affection for you all, I am, &c.

P. S. I had scarce finished this Letter when by express from the State of New York I received the Important and glorious news which follows:—

"ALBANY 15th Octr., 1777.

"Last night at 8 o'clock the capitulation whereby General Burgoyne & whole Army surrendered themselves Prisoners of

War, was signed and this Morning they have to march out towds. the River above Fish Creek with the Honours of War (and there ground their Arms) they are from thence to be marched to Massachusetts bay.

"We congratulate you on this happy event, & remain &c.

"GEO. CLINTON."

I most devoutly congratulate you, my country, and every well wisher to the cause on this signal stroke of Providence. Yrs. as before.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

CAMP, 20 MILES FROM PHILA., 19 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 16th I received yesterday morning, and was much obliged by the interesting contents.[2] The defeat of General Burgoyne is a most

[1] "I congratulate you upon the glorious success of our arms to the northward. The complete captivity of Burgoyne and his army exceeds our most sanguine expectations. I have not yet heard of Sir Henry Clinton's falling down the North River again, but I imagine he will not remain there after he has heard of Burgoyne's destruction."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 22 October, 1777.

[2] After the British had captured Fort Montgomery, and the other posts on the Hudson, General Putnam retreated from Peekskill, and established his head-quarters at Fishkill beyond the Highlands. He wrote to General Washington from Fishkill: "Last Monday General Parsons, with about two thousand troops, marched down and took possession of Peekskill, and the passes in the Highlands. He has taken a number of cattle, horses, and sheep, which were collected by the enemy. They had burnt the buildings and barracks at the Continental Village, and several dwelling-houses and other buildings at Peekskill. They have demolished Forts Montgomery and Constitution, and are repairing Fort Clinton. Yesterday about forty sail passed up the river crowded with troops, and are at anchor above Poughkeepsie, the wind not favoring. We were on our march after them when I met the agreeable intelligence of the surrender of General Burgoyne and his army as prisoners of war, a copy of which is enclosed. I thereupon most sincerely congratulate your Excellency. I have halted my troops, and am now considering what ought to be my movement; I have sent to Governor Clinton for his opinion, and ordered

important event, and such as must afford the highest satisfaction to every well-affected American breast. Should Providence be pleased to crown our arms in the course of the campaign with one more fortunate stroke, I think we shall have no great cause for anxiety respecting the future designs of Britain. I trust all will be well in His good time. The obvious intention of Sir Henry Clinton was to relieve General Burgoyne, and being disappointed in that by his surrender, I presume he will make an expeditious return. I am happy to find you at the head of so respectable a force, and flatter myself, if he should land with a view to action, though I do not expect it, you will give us a happy account of him. I believe, from the bravery of the garrison of Fort Montgomery, he purchased victory at no inconsiderable expense. General Campbell was certainly killed. This they mention in their own printed account, but call him colo. of the fifty-second regiment. He was a general on the American establishment, so declared in one of the orderly books, which fell into our hands.[1]

General Parsons to spare no pains to find out the situation and strength of the garrison at Kingsbridge, in order to direct my future operations most advantageously. I have about six thousand troops, who are chiefly militia. I understand that General Campbell was killed at Fort Montgomery, and several field-officers and others of inferior rank. The two Continental frigates and the row-galley were burnt, to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, for which I am very sorry, as one of them I believe might have been saved."—*MS. Letter*, October 16th.

[1] There is probably an error here, in regard to the identity of the persons. Sir Henry Clinton, in his official return of the killed and wounded, gives the name of "Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell of the fifty-second regiment." There was a General Campbell in the British army at that time; but General Dickinson, in a letter dated November 18th, states that he was then on Staten Island. Whence it would follow that he could not have been the same person that was killed at Fort Montgomery.—*Sparks.*

I have but little to add respecting the situation of affairs here. They remain much as they were, when I wrote you last. To remove the obstructions in the river seems to be a capital object with the enemy. Their attempts hitherto have not succeeded, and I hope they will not. I am extremely sorry for the death of Mrs. Putnam, and sympathize with you upon the occasion. Remembering that all must die, and that she had lived to an honorable age, I hope you will bear the misfortune with that fortitude and complacency of mind, that become a man and a Christian. I am, dear Sir, with great esteem, yours, &c.[1]

[1] "The fogginess of the morning is so very great that I think it probable that the enemy will attempt a surprise upon Fort Mifflin at such a time, or at night, if they mean it at all. To prevent this, I would recommend it to you to keep boats rowing guard as near the shore of Province Island as they possibly can with safety. . . . The enemy last night evacuated Germantown and fell down to Philadelphia. Our army will advance towards them in the morning, and as we shall be near them, I hope we shall prevent them from detaching any considerable force to reduce Fort Mifflin. I recommended it to Col. Smith to endeavor by all means to keep the breaches in the banks of Province Island open, as I am certain it will incommode them vastly in carrying on their works."—*Washington to Commodore Hazelwood*, 19 October, 1777.

There was a little friction between Colonel Smith and Commodore Hazelwood, which Washington undertook to smooth over. "I was extremely sorry to find from the Commodore's letter which made a part of yours that you and he were not in the strictest harmony. This circumstance I confess, gives me great uneasiness, as I well know that a good agreement between the navy and garrison is of the last importance, and that a want of co-operation and every possible mutual aid may involve the most unhappy consequences. Persuaded of this, and recollecting the train of misfortunes that has been brought on in many instances by a difference of the like nature, I requested Baron d'Arendt in my instructions to him that to maintain a good understanding between him and the Commodore should be a great object of his care and attention. This I hope he will do, and I have written to the Commodore to day recommending the same to him in the strongest terms. Hitherto a happy agreement has done much. It has disappointed the enemy from effecting, notwithstanding their repeated efforts, what they seemed to consider without difficulty; and should the same spirit and disposition continue, I flatter myself they will produce the same ends."—*Washington to Colonel Smith*, 21 October, 1777. "I cannot

TO JOHN HANCOCK.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, 22 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

It gives me real pain to learn, that the declining state of your health, owing to your unwearied atten-

but repeat my ardent desire that harmony and a good understanding between the fleet and the garrisons may be mutually cultivated. On this every thing depends; nothing but disappointment and disgrace can attend the want of it. The best designs and most important pursuits have been and ever will be defeated by foolish differences when they exist between those engaged in them." — *Washington to Commodore Hazelwood*, 21 October, 1777.

"You seem to have mistaken the Commodore's meaning. From his letter I understand, that he will always assist you whenever it is in his power. He tells you, that in rough weather his galleys and armed boats cannot live, and therefore guards you against expecting much assistance from them at such times. I beg you of all things not to suffer any jealousies between the land and sea service to take place. Consider that your mutual security depends upon acting perfectly in concert. I have wrote to Colonel Greene to afford you every possible assistance from Red Bank, till the reinforcement gets down." — *Washington to Lieutenant-Colonel Smith*, 28 October, 1777.

"I find something of the same kind existing between Smith and Monsr. Fleury, who I consider as a very valuable officer. How strange it is that men, engaged in the same important service, should be eternally bickering instead of giving mutual aid! Officers cannot act upon proper principles who suffer trifles to interpose to create distrust and jealousy. All our actions should be regulated by one uniform plan, and that plan should have one object only in view, to wit, the good of the service. Where this is the case, although there may be a diversity of opinion, there can be no real obstruction. I hope all these little rubs will be done away by your prudent management." — *Washington to Brigadier-General Varnum*, 4 November, 1777.

This function of peacemaker made many calls upon Washington's time, for the opportunities for differences and jealousies were frequent. "General Woodford complains that he lately wrote you a polite letter requesting necessaries for his Brigade which he sent by an officer, to which he says, you only returned him a rough verbal answer, without complying with his demand even in part. As General Woodford is an exceeding good officer and one who I think would not make extravagant or unnecessary demands, I could wish you would clear up this matter to his satisfaction." — *Washington to James Mease*, 12 November, 1777.

[1] "It is now above two years since I have had the honor of presiding in Congress, and I should esteem myself happy to have it in my power to render further service to my country in that department; but the decline of health,

tion to public business, and the situation of your private affairs, oblige you to relinquish a station, though but for a time, which you have so long filled with acknowledged propriety. Motives as well of a personal as of a general concern make me regret the necessity that compels you to retire, and to wish your absence from office may be of as short a duration as possible. In the progress of that intercourse, which has necessarily subsisted between us, the manner in which you have conducted it on your part, accompanied with every expression of politeness and regard to me, gives you a claim to my warmest acknowledgments.

occasioned by so long and unremitted an application to the duties of my office, both in Congress and out of Congress, joined to the situation of my own private affairs, has at length taught me to think of retiring for two or three months; and I have determined to take my leave the ensuing week, and set out immediately for Boston after this express returns. As the Congress will doubtless proceed to appoint a successor in my stead, on him therefore will devolve the business of the chair. The politeness and attention I have ever experienced from you, in the course of our correspondence, will always be a source of the most pleasing satisfaction to me."—*Hancock to Washington*, 17 October, 1777.

"Your favor of the 25th I received on Monday afternoon. You have my warmest wishes for your recovery, and I shall be happy if your recess should be attended with benefits, superior to your most sanguine expectations. Your exertions to promote the general interest I am well convinced will be unceasing, and that every measure, which the situation of your health will permit you to pursue, will be employed to that end, whether you are in Congress or obliged to remain in the State of Massachusetts. I have ordered Cornet Buckmer, with twelve dragoons, to attend you as an escort, and to receive your commands. For this purpose you will be pleased to retain them, as long as you may consider their attendance necessary. I would willingly have directed a larger number, but the severe duty the horse have been obliged to perform, for a long time past, has rendered many of them unfit for service; to which I must add, that we are under a necessity of keeping several considerable patrols of them constantly along the enemy's lines. These reasons, I trust, will apologize for the escort being so small."—*Washington to Hancock*, 2 November, 1777.

I am not so well informed of the situation of things up the North River, as to be able to give you any satisfactory advice about your route. I should rather apprehend it might be unsafe for you to travel that way at this time, and would recommend, if you can do it without any material inconvenience, that you should defer your journey till there is some change in affairs there, or till they have taken a more settled form. If you should, however, resolve to proceed immediately, and will be pleased to signify the time, an escort of horse will meet you at Bethlehem, to accompany you to General Putnam's camp, where you will be furnished with another escort in the further prosecution of your journey.

I am extremely obliged to you for your polite tender of services during your intended residence at Boston, and shall always be happy, when leisure and opportunity permit, if you will give me the pleasure of hearing from you. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 24 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

It ever has been, and I hope ever will be a ruling principle with me, to endeavor to do impartial justice to every officer, over whom I have the honor to preside. I shall therefore in answer to the queries, con-

[1] "Congress have reason to complain of my not making them general returns of the army more frequently, but I hope they will excuse me when they consider that I have not been for some time past two days in a place, and I assure you

tained in your letter of this date, readily declare, that, although I ascribed the misfortune, which happened to us on the 11th of September, principally to the information of Major Spear, transmitted to me by you, yet I never blamed you for conveying that intelligence. On the contrary, considering from whom and in what manner it came to you, I should have thought you culpable in concealing it. The Major's rank, reputation, and knowledge of the country, gave him a full claim to credit and attention. His intelligence was no doubt a most unfortunate circumstance, as it served to derange the disposition that had been determined on, in consequence of prior information of the enemy's attempt to turn and attack our right flank; which ultimately proving true, too little time was left us, after discovering its certainty, to form a new plan, and make adequate arrangements to prevent its success. Hence arose that hurry and consequent confusion, which afterwards ensued. But it was not your fault, that the intelligence was eventually found to be erroneous.

With respect to your other query, whether your being posted on the right was to guard that flank, and if you had neglected it, I can only observe, that the obvious if not declared purpose of your being there implied every necessary precaution for the security of that flank. But it is at the same time to be remarked, that all the fords above Chad's, which

it sometimes happens that the officers have not paper to make the necessary returns. But I will take the first opportunity of making a full and regular one." —*Washington to Richard Peters*, 22 October, 1777.

we were taught to apprehend danger from, were guarded by detachments from your division; and that we were led to believe, by those whom we had reason to think well acquainted with the country, that no ford above our pickets could be passed, without making a very circuitous march.

Upon the whole, then, no part of your conduct, preceding the action, was in my judgment reprehensible. What happened on your march to the field of battle, your disposition there, and behavior during the action, I can say nothing about, no part till the retreat commenced having come under my immediate observation. I can only add, therefore, that the whole tenor of your conduct, so far as I have had opportunities of judging, has been spirited and active. I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 24 October, 1777.

SIR,

I do myself the honor of transmitting to Congress the enclosed copies of sundry letters just now received, and congratulate them most sincerely on the important intelligence which they contain. The damage the enemy have sustained in their ships, I hope, will prevent their future attempts to gain the passage of the river; and the repulse of the troops under Count Donop, and his captivity, I flatter myself, will also be attended with the most happy con-

sequences.[1] At the time these actions happened, a supply of ammunition was on the way to the forts; and I have also ordered a further quantity to be immediately sent. By Colonel Blaine, one of the issuing commissaries, who left Red Bank the morning before the action, I am happily informed that he had thrown considerable supplies of provision into both garrisons. He also adds, that he came from Jersey this morning, and that the enemy had recrossed the Delaware and

[1] Major Ward's letter was dated, October 23d.—"By the desire of Colonel Greene," he wrote, "I congratulate your Excellency on the success of the troops under his command yesterday. On the 21st instant, four battalions of Germans, amounting to about twelve hundred men, commanded by Count Donop, landed at Cooper's Ferry, and marched the same evening to Haddonfield. At three o'clock yesterday morning they marched for this place. When the guard at Timber Creek Bridge were informed of their approach, they took up that bridge, and the enemy filed off to the left and crossed a bridge four miles above. Their advanced parties were discovered within four miles of the fort at twelve o'clock. At half after four in the afternoon they sent a flag to summon the fort. The reply was, that it should never be surrendered. At three quarters past four they began a brisk cannonade, and soon after advanced in two columns to the attack. They passed the *abatis*, gained the ditch, and some few got over the pickets; but the fire was so heavy, that they were soon driven out again, with considerable loss; and they retreated precipitately towards Haddonfield. The enemy's loss amounts to one lieutenant-colonel, three captains, four lieutenants, and near seventy killed; and Count Donop, his brigade-major, a captain, lieutenant, and upwards of seventy non-commissioned officers and privates wounded and taken prisoners. We are also informed, that several wagons are taken. The Colonel proposes to send the wounded officers to Burlington. He also enjoins me to tell your Excellency, that both officers and men behaved with the greatest bravery. The action lasted forty minutes."

The Hessians confessed to a loss of four hundred and two killed and wounded, of whom twenty-six were officers.

Count Donop died of his wounds three days after the action, at a house near the fort. A short time before his death, he said to Monsieur Duplessis, a French officer, who constantly attended him in his illness: "It is finishing a noble career early; I die the victim of my ambition and of the avarice of my sovereign."—Chastellux's *Travels*, vol. i., p. 266. This was told to Chastellux and Lafayette by Duplessis himself, when they afterwards visited the spot to-

returned to Philadelphia. I have written to Colonel Greene, that the prisoners must be immediately sent from his post; and Mr. Clymer, a deputy under Mr. Boudinot, will set out to-morrow morning to make a proper disposition of them.[1]

gether. Count Donop was considered a gallant and valuable officer. The fortification at Red Bank was called Fort Mercer.

The naval part of the action is thus described by Commodore Hazelwood. "While the fort at Red Bank was attacked, the Augusta of sixty-four guns, the Roebuck of forty-four, two frigates, the Merlin of eighteen guns, and a galley, came up through the lower chevaux-de-frise, and were attacked by our floating batteries and some of the galleys, while the rest of the galleys were flanking the enemy, that were attacking the fort. These galleys did much execution. As soon as the enemy were repulsed at the fort, the ships [October 23d], finding so hot a fire, endeavored to fall down, but the Augusta and Merlin were grounded. Early the galleys and floating batteries attacked them, and an incessant fire was kept up. About eleven o'clock I believe one of our shot set the Augusta on fire, and at twelve she blew up, being aground. The engagement continued with the other ships, and at three in the afternoon the Merlin we think also took fire and blew up. Then the firing ceased on both sides. The Roebuck dropped down to the lower chevaux-de-frise and went through. Yesterday I went down to the wrecks, and found that the guns of both ships might be got out, if the enemy's ships can be kept at a proper distance. We brought off two twenty-four pounders, and as soon as possible I shall endeavor to get the rest."—*MS. Letter*, October 26th.

Commodore Hazelwood also complained of his deficiency of men. "The fleet is now so poorly manned," he said, "(and the constant cry from Fort Mifflin is to guard that post,) that I know not how to act without more assistance." There had been numerous desertions from the fleet, particularly from the vessels belonging to Pennsylvania. Colonel Smith had written some time before: "So general a discontent and panic ran through that part of the fleet, that neither officers nor men can be confided in. They conceive the river is lost, if the enemy gets possession of Billingsport. Nothing can convince them of the contrary, and I am persuaded, that, as soon as that fort is taken, almost all the fleet will desert. Indeed, from their disposition I am induced to believe they will openly avow themselves and desert, officers with their crews, and perhaps with their galleys, which has been the case with two."—October 2d.

[1] "I heartily congratulate you upon this happy event, and beg you will accept my most particular thanks, and present the same to your whole garrison, both officers and men. Assure them, that their gallantry and good behavior meet my warmest approbation. All the prisoners should be immediately removed to a distance from your post, to some convenient and safe place. I am

It gives me great concern to inform Congress, that, after all my exertions, we are still in a distressed situation for want of blankets and shoes. At this time no inconsiderable part of our force is incapable of acting, through the deficiency of the latter; and I fear, without we can be relieved, it will be the case with two-thirds of the army in the course of a few days. I am and have been waiting with the most anxious impatience for a confirmation of General Burgoyne's surrender. I have received no further intelligence respecting it, except vague report, than the first account, which came to hand so long ago as Saturday morning. If Congress have had authentic advices about it, I wish to be favored with them. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

sorry you have thought of sending the officers to Burlington, as they would be in no kind of security at that place, but might be taken and carried off by the enemy with the greatest ease. Immediately on the receipt of this, you will be pleased to have all the prisoners both officers and men conveyed to Morristown. The wounded can be accommodated in the hospitals there and in its neighborhood. Count Donop in particular is a man of importance, and ought by all means to be taken care of."—*Washington to Col. Christopher Greene*, 24 October, 1777.

[1] "Proclamation by his Excellency George Washington, Commander-in-chief of the Forces of the United States of America.—Whereas sundry soldiers belonging to the armies of the said States have deserted from the same; these are to make known to all those, who have so offended, and who shall return to their respective corps, or surrender themselves to the officers appointed to receive recruits and deserters in their several States, or to any Continental commissioned officer, before the first day of January next, that they shall obtain a full and free pardon;—And I do further declare to all such obstinate offenders as do not avail themselves of the indulgence hereby offered, that they may depend, when apprehended, on being prosecuted with the utmost rigor, and suffering the punishment justly due to crimes of such enormity. Lest the hope of escaping punishment, by remaining undiscovered, should tempt any to reject the terms now held out to them, they may be assured, that the most effectual measures will be pursued in every State for apprehending and bringing them to a speedy trial."—Dated October 24th. This proclamation was issued in obedience to a resolve by Congress.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL FORMAN.

SKIPPACK ROAD, 15TH MILE STONE,
25 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

My Letter of the 21st Inst. (which I hope has got safe to your hands) would amply convey to you my Ideas of the Importance of Red Bank, and leaves me little to add on that head, saving, that the more it is considered, the more essential it appears, to use every possible means for its preservation.

The late check which the Enemy met with, in attempting to storm the Fort at that place is a most fortunate event; but I am far from conceiving that it will deter them from endeavoring by slower, and more effectual means, to possess themselves of it.—To make themselves perfect masters of the River and the defences of the Cheveaux de Frieze it is essential to them to occupy that spot. It is equally essential to us to disappoint them, by every exertion in our power; I wish therefore, most ardently, to hear of your being in the neighborhood with a respectable body of Militia, as the preservation of these Forts will, in the judgment of most men, rid Phild. of their present guests, and Jersey of the disagreeable Situation of being between two Fires; for it is not to be expected that the Enemy will remain long quiet after having once established themselves in the City—Jersey must then afford them supplies, be ravaged with Impunity from a force constantly kept for protection of the Inhabitants—how burthensome this will be, let the people themselves judge.

Colo. Green who commands at Red bank seems to apprehend nothing from a storm, but every thing from an Investiture, as the work is contracted and unprovided with the smallest defence against shells, which would drive them out immediately. A siege therefore must be prevented—and this can not be prevented without the assistance of your Militia—I am too well acquainted with your activity and zeal to add more on this head, and therefore conclude with strong assurances of being Dr. Sir, &c.

CIRCULAR TO PULASKI AND COLONELS OF HORSE.

HEADQUARTERS, 25 October, 1777.

SIR,

I am sorry to find that the liberty I granted to the light dragoons of impressing horses near the enemy's lines has been most horribly abused and perverted into a mere plundering scheme. I intended nothing more than that the horses belonging to the disaffected in the neighborhood of the British Army, should be taken for the use of the dismounted dragoons, and expected, that they would be regularly reported to the Quarter Master General, that an account might be kept of the number and the persons from whom they were taken, in order to a future settlement. —Instead of this I am informed that under pretence of the authority derived from me, they go about the country plundering whomsoever they are pleased to denominate tories, and converting what they get to their own private profit and emolument. This is an abuse that cannot be tolerated; and as I find the

license allowed them, has been made a sanction for such mischievous practices, I am under the necessity of recalling it altogether. You will therefore immediately make it known to your whole corps, that they are not under any pretence whatever to meddle with the horses or other property of any inhabitant whatever on pain of the severest punishment, for they may be assured as far as it depends upon me that military execution will attend all those who are caught in the like practice hereafter.

The more effectually to put it out of their power to elude this prohibition, all the horses in your corps, in the use of the non commissioned officers and privates, not already stamped with the Continental brand are without loss of time to be brought to the Qr. Master General to receive that brand; and henceforth if any of them shall be found with horses that are without it they shall be tried for marauding and disobedience of orders.

I am fully confident, you will be equally disposed with me to reprobate and abolish the practice complained of; and will adopt the strictest measures to fulfil the intention of this letter, and prevent its continuance in future. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 25 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I have your favor of the 20th, enclosing a copy of General Burgoyne's capitulation, which was the first authentic intelligence I received of the affair. Indeed I began to grow uneasy and almost to suspect that

the first accounts you transmitted to me were premature. As I have not received a single line from General Gates, I do not know what steps he is taking with the army under his command, and therefore cannot advise what is most proper to be done in your quarter. But I should think, if a junction of your forces was formed, part to proceed down upon one side of the river and part upon the other, that Sir Henry Clinton would be obliged to retreat immediately before you; or, if he suffered you to get between him and New York, you perhaps might in its weak state get into the city. I mention this merely as a matter of opinion, taking it for granted you will pursue the most proper and efficacious measure. Whatever may be determined upon, I beg it may be constantly communicated to me, as the operations of this army may depend much upon the situation of yours. * * * I am, dear Sir, &c.

CALL FOR A COUNCIL OF OFFICERS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 26 October, 1777.

SIR,

You will, very shortly, be called to a council of War, when your sentiments on the following questions will be asked.

1st, Whether it will be prudent in our present circumstances, and strength, to attempt by a General Attack to dislodge the Enemy; and if it is, and we unsuccessful, where we retreat to?

2d, If such an attack should not be thought eligible, what general disposition of the Army had best take place till the weather forces us from the Field?

3d, Where and in what manner, supposing the Enemy to keep possession of Philadelphia, had the Continental Troops best be Cantoned after they can no longer keep the Field?

4th, What measures can be adopted to cover the country near

the City, and prevent the Enemy from drawing Supplies therefrom during the Winter?

5th, Will the Office of Inspector General to our Army, for the purpose principally, of establishing one uniform set of Manœuvres, and manual be advisable, as the time of the Adjutant General seems to be totally engaged with other business?

6th, Should Regimental promotion extend only to Captains Inclusively, or that of the Majority?

7th, Will it be consistent with propriety and good policy to allow Soldiers the reward offered to others for apprehending Deserters?

8th, The Commissaries Complaining of the number, and disproportion of the Rations which are Issued to the Troops, and at the same time of the advanced price of all kinds of Spirits, owing to the Imposition of the Sutlers upon the Soldiery, what regulation, and Remedy can be applied to rectify the one, and prevent the other? I am, Sir, &c.[1]

[1] The Council of War was held on the 29th, and Washington laid before it a general account of the situation, stating the strength of the two armies as follows: That the troops under Sir William Howe present and fit for duty amounted, according to the best intelligence he could obtain, to ten thousand rank and file, stationed at Philadelphia and in its immediate vicinity; and that the force under his command, present and fit for duty, was eight thousand three hundred and thirteen Continental troops, and two thousand seven hundred and seventeen militia. There were, in addition, six hundred and fifty Continental troops at Red Bank and Fort Mifflin, and a detachment of three hundred militia on their way to reinforce those posts. A body of five hundred militia under General Potter was likewise on the other side of the Schuylkill. This was his whole force, and it was likely soon to suffer a diminution of nineteen hundred and eighty-six militia, by the expiration of the term of service for which those from Maryland and Virginia had been engaged.

The decision of the Council on the General's questions was:

1. It was not advisable to make an attack upon Philadelphia.

2. The army should take a position to the left of its present station, and the garrisons at Red Bank and Fort Mifflin should be reinforced.

3 and 4. Deferred. It was decided that twenty regiments should be drawn from the northern army.

5. Such an officer was advisable, the manual or regulations to be first agreed upon by the commander-in-chief or a board of officers appointed for that purpose.

6. Promotions should be regimental as high as Captains inclusively. All from that rank, in the line of the State.

7. The reward should be allowed.

8. Deferred.

TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON AND JOHN WHARTON, OF THE NAVY BOARD.[1]

GENTLEMEN, SKIPPACK ROAD, 27 October, 1777.

The more I reflect upon the evil, that may arise from the enemy's possessing themselves of our unfinished frigates up the Delaware, the more convinced I am of the indispensable obligation we are under to prevent it effectually. If no other method could be devised, I should be for absolutely burning them; but scuttling and sinking them, with or without ballast, as those, who are best acquainted with the difficulties of raising them in either state at this season, may determine, will in my judgment answer the end. We all know that the enemy have made one vigorous (though unsuccessful) effort to dispossess us of our forts, and drive off our vessels, which defend the chevaux-de-frise in the river; we know, also, that, besides having the Delaware frigate, they are busily employed in preparing two other large armed vessels at the city. If, in addition to these, they should by surprise or force obtain the frigates above Bordentown, and bring the whole in aid of their ships in a general attack upon our little fleet (thus surrounded) we may, but too easily without the spirit of divination, foretell the consequences. Their destruction will be certain and inevitable.

At present these frigates are of no use to us, while the hands are greatly wanted. Considered therefore

[1] When the Congress retired from Philadelphia to York, the Navy Board remained behind, and continued chiefly at Bordentown in New Jersey, where their services could be more immediately rendered in managing the concerns of the Continental shipping in the Delaware.

in this point of view simply, the measure proposed, in my opinion, is highly expedient; and under the prevailing sentiment, that the enemy cannot hold Philadelphia, unless their shipping get up, it appears absolutely necessary. The fatal consequences, which may result from suffering the frigates to fall into the enemy's hands, are too obvious to need more arguments to prove them; and when it is considered of how little importance they are to us in their present situation, prudence requires that they should be so disposed of as to be hereafter useful, and put out of the way of being destroyed by the enemy or being rendered serviceable to them.

Upon the whole, I take the liberty of delivering it as my clear opinion, that the frigates ought to be immediately and with the utmost secrecy sunk, either with or without ballast, (so as to make it next to impossible to raise them, without men's diving either to unlade or fix their purchases,) and that their crews should be sent down to the fleet below, where sailors are exceedingly wanted.[1] If I have stepped out of the line of my duty to make this request, I am persuaded you will excuse it when I add, that the good of the service, not only in my judgment but in that of others, absolutely requires it to be carried into execution. I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] Congress interfered, and directed that the frigates be lightened as much as possible, "and either run into some adjacent creek or hauled as high upon shore as may be without ballast, and a battery constructed with the guns of the Washington on the most convenient ground to cover the frigates from the enemy; that the frigates should be charged properly with combustibles, and a careful watch employed under a vigilant officer to burn them rather than

TO LANDON CARTER.

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY, 27 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my sincere thanks for your sollicitude on my Acct.—and for ye good advice contained in your little paper of the 27th Ulto.—at the same time that I assure you, that It is not my wish to avoid any danger which duty requires me to encounter. I can as confidently add, that it is not my intention to run unnecessary risques—In the Instance given by you, I was acting precisely in the line of my duty, but not in the dangerous situation you have been led to believe.—I was reconnoitring, but I had a strong party of Horse with me.—I was, as (I afterwards found) in a disaffected House at the head of Elk, but I was equally guarded agt. friend and Foe.—the information of danger then, came not from me.

So many accts. have been published of the battle of brandy wine, that nothing more can be said of it—the subsequent Ingagement on the 4th Instt. had every appearance (after a hot contest of two hours and forty minutes) of a glorious decision; but after driving the Enemy from their Incampment—possess-

suffer them to fall into the hands of the enemy; and lest this should fail, that a sufficient number of small craft should be sunk in the channel below the frigates, effectually to obstruct the enemy from moving them down the river if they should happen to gain possession of them, and a battery be constructed in the most convenient manner to cover the obstructions and prevent the enemy from removing them; that all the vessels of whatever kind should be run up as high above the batteries aforesaid as possible, and the most effectual precautions taken immediately on the approach of the enemy."—*Journals of Congress*, 4 November, 1777. A copy of this resolution was sent to Washington for his approval, and is considered in his letter of November 10th.

ing their ground—and being, as we thought, upon the point of grasping victory, it was snatched from us by means altogether unaccountable, excepting that a very heavy atmosphere, aided by the smoke from Field pieces and Small arms rendered it impossible, at times, to distinguish friend from Foe at the distance of 30 yards, which caused our Men, I believe, to take fright at each other. Since that the Enemy have retired to Phila., where they have been strengthening themselves as much as possible, whilst we hover round to cut of their Supplies.

The Enemy are exerting their utmost skill, to reduce the Forts constructed for the defence of the Cheveaux de friese in Delaware, and to drive of our little Fleet, employed in aid of them.—On the 22d Inst. Count Donop, a Hessian Officer of Rank, & great Military Abilities, with 1200 of his Countrymen undertook to storm one of these Works (called Fort Mercer at Red bank on the Jersey shore) when himself and about 400 others were killed and wounded—between two and three hundred were left slain, and badly wounded on the spot—the rest got of with their retreating brethren, who made the best of their way to Phila.—the Count is among the Wounded—supposed Mortally.

The next day, several of the Enemy's Ships, having passed the lower Cheveaux de friese, aided by their Land Batteries, began a most tremendous cannonade upon Fort Mifflin (on an Island near the Pennsylvania shore) and on our Armed vessels adjoining, which continued Six hours without Intermission; and ended

in the destruction of two of the Enemy's Ships of War—one, a Sixty four gun Ship—the other 18—Our damage on both these occasions was inconsiderable—in the Attack on Fort Mercer we had abt. 30 Men killed and wounded—at Fort Mifflin, and the Ships, less. The possession of these defences is of such essential Importance to the Enemy that they are leaving no stone unturned to succeed—we are doing what we can (under many disadvantages) to disappoint them.

The great and important event to the Northward —of which no doubt you have heard—must be attended with the most fortunate consequences. It has caused Sir Henry Clinton's expedition from New York, in aid of Burgoyne to end in (something more than smoke indeed) burning of Mills, Gentlemen's Seats, and the Villages near the Water! an evident proof of their despair of carrying their diabolical designs into execution.—My Inclination leads me to give you a more minute detail of the Situation of our Army, but prudence forbids, as Letters are subject to too many Miscarriages.—My best respects attends the good family at Sabine Hall, Neighbours at Mount Airy, &c, & with Affecte. regard I remain, Dr. Sir.

P. S. I am persuaded you will excuse this scratch'd scrawl, when I assure you it is with difficulty I write at all.

I have this Instant received an acct. of the Prisoners taken by the Northern Army (Including Tories in arms agt. us) in the course of the Campaign—this singular Instance of Providence, and our good

fortune under it exhibits a striking proof of the advantages which result from unanimity & a spirited conduct in the Militia—the Northern army before the surrender of Genl. Gates was reenforced by upwards of 12000 Militia who shut the only door by which Burgoyne could Retreat, and cut of all his supplies.—How different our case!—the disaffection of great part of the Inhabitants of this State—the languor of others & internal distraction of the whole, have been among the great and insuperable difficulties I have met with, and have contributed not a little to my embarrassment this Campaign,—but enough! I do not mean to complain, I flatter myself that a Superintending Providence is ordering every thing for the best—and that, in due time, all will end well. —that it may do so, and soon, is the most fervent wish of &c.

PRISONERS.

British	2442	
Foreigners	2198	
Canadians	1100	
		5740
Genl. Burgoyne and Staff among which are 6 Members of Parliament	12	
Sick and Wounded	598	
Prisoners of War before Surrender	400	
		1010
Killed and taken at Bennington	1220	
Ditto between the 17th Sept. and the 18th October	600	
		1820
Taken at Tyconderoga		413
Killed in Genl. Herkimers Action		300
Deserters		300
		9583

Indians, Drivers, Sutlers &c Excepted.

ORDNANCE.

	No.	Wt.
At Bennington	2	12 Pounders
	2	6
	2	3
At Fort Schuyler	2	6 and 4 Royals
At the Battle of the 7th	2	12
	6	6
At the Capitulation	2	24
	2	12
	12	6
	9	3
Howitzers	2	8 Inch
Mortars	2	10 "
	45 encluding 4 Royals	49

400 Sett of Harness a Number of Ammunition Waggons Compleat.

Light Dragoons	258	38th Do.	270
Roy: Artillery	434	40th Do.	289
First Battn. Marines	315	44th Do.	284
Second Do.	304	45th Do.	301
Grenadiers	698	47th Do.	332
Lt. Infantry	650	49th Do.	308
4th Regiment	295	52d Do.	291
5th Do.	284	55th Do.	204
10th Do.	279	63d Do.	287
17th Do.	313	64th Do.	396
22d Do.	297	65th Do.	140
23d Do.	283		
35th Do.	297		7809

The General and Regimental Hospital not Including in the Above Return amounting to between 5 and 600 Men. Nor according to the said Acct. are the Staff Officers or Women.[1]

[1] For a full copy of this letter I am indebted to Dr. John S. H. Fogg, of Boston.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 30 October, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

It having been judged expedient by the members of a council of war held yesterday, that one of the gentlemen of my family should be sent to General Gates, in order to lay before him the state of this army and the situation of the enemy, and to point out to him the many happy consequences, that will accrue from an immediate reinforcement being sent from the northern army, I have thought proper to appoint you to that duty, and desire that you will immediately set out for Albany, at which place or in the neighborhood, I imagine you will find General Gates.

You are so fully acquainted with the two principal points on which you are sent, namely, the "state of our army and the situation of the enemy," that I shall not enlarge on these heads. What you are chiefly to attend to is, to point out in the clearest and fullest manner to General Gates the absolute necessity that there is for his detaching a very considerable part of the army, at present under his command, to the reinforcement of this; a measure that will in all probability reduce General Howe to the same situation in which General Burgoyne now is, should he attempt to remain in Philadelphia without being able to remove the obstructions in the Delaware, and opening a free communication with his shipping.

The force, which the members of the council of war judged it safe and expedient to draw down at

present, are the three New Hampshire and fifteen Massachusetts regiments, with Lee's and Jackson's, two of the sixteen additionals. But it is more than probable, that General Gates may have destined part of these troops to the reduction of Ticonderoga, should the enemy not have evacuated it, or to the garrisoning of it, if they should. In that case, the reinforcement will vary according to circumstances; but if possible let it be made up to the same number out of other corps. If, upon your meeting with General Gates, you should find that he intends, in consequence of his success, to employ the troops under his command upon some expedition, by the prosecution of which the common cause will be more benefitted than by their being sent down to reinforce this army, it is not my wish to give any interruption to the plan. But if he should have nothing more in contemplation, than those particular objects, which I have mentioned to you, and which it is unnecessary to commit to paper, in that case you are to inform him, that it is my desire that the reinforcements before mentioned, or such part of them as can be safely spared, be immediately put in march to join this army.

I have understood, that General Gates has already detached Nixon's and Glover's brigades to join General Putnam; and General Dickinson informs me, that by intelligence, which he thinks may be depended upon, Sir Henry Clinton has come down the river with his whole force. If this be a fact, you are to desire General Putnam to send the two brigades forward with the greatest expedition, as there can be

no occasion for them there.[1] I expect you will meet Colonel Morgan's corps upon their way down; if you do, let them know how essential their services are to us, and desire the Colonel, or commanding officer, to hasten their march, as much as is consistent with the health of the men after their late fatigues. Let me hear from you when you reach the North River, and upon your arrival at Albany. I wish you a pleasant journey, and am, dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR WHITEMARSH, 15 MILES FROM PHILA., October 30, 1777.

SIR,

By this opportunity I do myself the pleasure to congratulate you on the signal success of the army under your command, in compelling General Burgoyne and his whole force to surrender themselves prisoners of war; an event that does the highest honor to the American arms, and which, I hope, will be attended with the most extensive and happy con-

[1] The British evacuated Forts Montgomery and Clinton, on the 26th of October, and the same day proceeded down the river with their whole force both of troops and shipping. In a letter from General Putnam to the Commander-in-chief, dated at Fishkill, October 31st, he stated that Poor's, Warner's, Learned's, and Paterson's brigades, Colonel Van Schaick's regiment, and Morgan's riflemen, were on their way from the northward to join him, amounting in the whole to five thousand seven hundred men, which number, added to those already with him, would make his whole force about nine thousand strong, exclusive of Morgan's corps, the artillery-men, and the militia from Connecticut and New York. The militia had been mostly discharged. General Warner's brigade consisted of sixteen hundred Massachusetts militia, whose time of service was to expire at the end of November.

On the same day that the above intelligence was communicated, General Putnam called a council of his principal officers, whose unanimous advice it was, that four thousand men should move down the west side of the Hudson

sequences. At the same time, I cannot but regret, that a matter of such magnitude, and so interesting to our general operations, should have reached me by report only, or through the channel of letters, not bearing that authenticity, which the importance of it required, and which it would have received by a line under your signature, stating the simple fact.

Our affairs having happily terminated at the northward, I have by the advice of my general officers sent Colonel Hamilton, one of my aids, to lay before you a full state of our situation, and that of the enemy in this quarter. He is well informed upon the subject, and will deliver my sentiments upon the plan of operations, that is become necessary to be pursued. I think it improper to enter into a particular detail, not being well advised how matters are circumstanced on the North River, and fearing that by some accident my letter might miscarry. From Colonel Hamilton you will have a clear and comprehensive view of things, and I persuade myself you will do all in your power to facilitate the objects I have in contemplation.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.[1]

and take post near Haverstraw; that one thousand should be retained in the Highlands to guard the country and repair the works; and that the remainder should march down on the east side of the river towards Kingsbridge, except Morgan's corps, which was ordered immediately to join the Commander-in-chief. The object proposed by this disposition of the forces was to cause a diversion of the enemy in New York, and prevent a reinforcement from being sent to General Howe; and it was doubtless an ulterior purpose to attack the city, should a favorable opportunity present itself.—*Minutes of the Council*, October 31st.

[1] General Gates wrote a very short letter to Washington, on the 2d of November, and of course before this could have reached him, giving notice that Morgan's corps had been sent to the southward. He added, apparently as a

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR WHITEMARSH,
1 November, 1777.

SIR,

I was duly honored with Mr. Hancock's Letter of the 25th with its several Inclosures.

I shall take the case of John More under consideration, and will transmit Colo. Mason my determination upon the same.

At this time, I cannot inform the Commissary whether any alterations have, or have not been made by Genl. Orders in the original ration establishment. I have been under the necessity from time to time to send away my Orderly Books, and they are necessary to be examined upon the subject. However I think it probable that a departure from the first allowance may have been found expedient, and directed by some authority, or the Commissary would not have adopted it.—In respect to the alteration referred to my consideration, it is a matter of consequence, and I have desired the Genl. Officers to inform themselves whether it will be agreeable to the Army at large or what other regulations may be necessary in this Instance—as soon as I have their sentiments, I will write to Congress, upon the subject.

The Enemy still consider the possession of our Posts upon the River of great importance, and from

matter of secondary consequence: "Congress having been requested immediately to transmit copies of all my despatches to them, I am confident your Excellency has long ago received all the good news from this quarter." These words contain the only intelligence, which was transmitted to the Commander-in-chief by General Gates, respecting the defeat of Burgoyne, and the convention of Saratoga.

their preparation of Fascines, &c., and the best information I have been able to obtain, they will make further efforts to carry them. Viewing them in this light myself and imagining, that they would persevere in their plans to occupy them, I wrote some days ago in the most pressing terms to Genls Dickinson, Forman and Newcomb, to afford every aid in their power to the Militia of Jersey. As yet we have received but little, and I have no encouragement to expect that it will be much augmented in a short time. This does not proceed from a want of activity and exertion on the part of two first mentioned Gentlemen, whose conduct and zeal upon every occasion give them a claim to the Public esteem, but in a considerable degree from the peculiar circumstances of their State at this time. The apprehensions of an Invasion from Staten Island, keep a large proportion of the Militia from the Eastern and upper part of the State almost constantly employed at and in the neighborhood of Eliza. Town and Mr. Livingston's Powers, as Governor, being expired, and no provision made, it seems, for such a contingency, there are none of sufficient authority to order them out till a new appointment can be had;—at least, there is ground to suspect that the orders and exertions of these two Gentlemen, unassisted by Civil authority, will not be attended with the advantages we wish, and which our affairs require. As to Genl. Newcomb, who is in the neighborhood of Red Bank, notwithstanding my most urgent and repeated solicitations, I have little to expect from him, if I may

form an estimate of his future services from those he has already rendered.[1]

Under these circumstances, I have been obliged to detach a further reinforcement of Continental Troops under Genl. Varnum to maintain the two Garrisons if possible—besides sailors drawn from the line to man the Gallies. This detachment, when it arrives, added to the force now in the Forts will make the whole amount to 1600 effective rank and file sent from this Army.

After the action of the 4th ultimo at Germantown, I hoped we should have been in a situation to attack the enemy again on those grounds, and with more success than in the former instance; but this I was not able to effect. The severe rain on the 16th of September, the action on the 4th, the removal of our stores, and having to form a new elaboratory, added to the small number of hands engaged in the business of it, laid us under difficulties in the capital and essential article of ammunition, that could not be surmounted. Every exertion was directed to obtain supplies; but, notwithstanding, they were inadequate, too scanty, and insufficient to attempt any thing on a large and general scale, before the enemy withdrew themselves. With what we had, in case an experiment had been made, fortune might have decided in our favor for the present; but we should not have been afterwards in a situation to maintain the advantage we might have gained; and, if a repulse had taken place, and the enemy been pursued, for want

[1] Newcomb had failed to make any return of his men, or to undertake any duty.

of a reserve we should have been exposed to the most imminent danger of being ruined. The distress of the soldiers for want of shoes was also a powerful obstacle to the measure.

I could wish that our circumstances were now such as to authorize a general attack for dislodging them from the city; but I think that they are not. This also is the opinion of my general officers, upon a full and comprehensive view of matters, as Congress will perceive by the enclosed copy of the minutes of council on the 29th ultimo, which I have taken the liberty to transmit and lay before them. The superiority of numbers on the part of the enemy, in respect to regular troops; their superior discipline, and the redoubts and lines which they have thrown up between the two rivers and about the city; the happy state of our affairs at the northward, and the practicability of drawing succors from thence; the consequences of a defeat;—these were all motives, which led to a decision against an attack at this time. I have sent Colonel Hamilton, one of my aids, to General Gates, to give him a just representation of things, and to explain to him the expediency of our receiving the reinforcements, which have been determined necessary, if they will not interfere and frustrate any important plans he may have formed. Indeed I cannot conceive that there is any object now remaining, that demands our attention and most vigorous efforts so much, as the destruction of the army in this quarter. Should we be able to effect this, we shall have little to fear in future.

General Howe's force, according to the statement now made, is more considerable than it was generally supposed to be. I did not think it quite so great myself, but always imagined the common estimate much too low; nor can I positively say what it really is. However, there are strong reasons to believe that it is not overrated. After the evacuation of Germantown, an almost infinite number of scraps and bits of paper were found, which, being separated and arranged with great industry and care, bear the marks of genuine and authentic returns at different periods. The manner in which they were destroyed and disposed of gives no room to suspect that it was the effect of design. In addition to this, I am informed by General Putnam that he had heard a reinforcement of four regiments was coming round to Delaware from New York. The enclosed return will give Congress a general view of the strength of this army when it was made, and a particular one of the forces of each State which compose it. By this they will perceive how greatly deficient the whole are in furnishing their just quotas. The militia from Maryland and Virginia are no longer to be counted on. All the former, except about two hundred, are already gone; and a few days, I expect, will produce the departure of the whole or chief part of the latter, from the importunate applications which some of them have made. Besides this diminution, I am apprehensive we shall have several men added to the sick list, by reason of the late excessive rain and want of clothes. We have not yet come to any

determination respecting the disposition of our troops for the winter; supposing it a matter of great importance, and that for the present we should be silent upon it. The reasons will readily occur. By continuing the campaign, perhaps many salutary if not decisive advantages may be derived; but it appears to me that this must depend upon the supplies of clothing which the men receive. If they cannot be accommodated in this instance, it will be difficult if not impossible to do it without effecting their destruction.

I would take the liberty to mention, that I feel myself in a delicate situation with respect to the Marquis de Lafayette. He is extremely solicitous of having a command equal to his rank, and professes very different ideas, as to the purposes of his appointment, from those Congress have mentioned to me. He certainly did not understand them. I do not know in what light they will view the matter; but it appears to me, from a consideration of his illustrious and important connexions, the attachment which he has manifested for our cause, and the consequences which his return in disgust might produce, that it will be advisable to gratify him in his wishes; and the more so, as several gentlemen from France, who came over under some assurances, have gone back disappointed in their expectations. His conduct, with respect to them, stands in a favorable point of view, having interested himself to remove their uneasiness, and urged the impropriety of their making any unfavorable representations upon their arrival at

home; and in all his letters has placed our affairs in the best situation he could. Besides, he is sensible, discreet in his manners, has made great proficiency in our language, and, from the disposition he discovered at the battle of Brandywine, possesses a large share of bravery and military ardor. There is a French gentleman here, Monsieur Vrigny, in whose favor the Marquis seems much interested. He assures me he is an officer of great merit, and, from that motive and a regard to the service, wishes to see him promoted. The rank he holds in France, and his present expectations, are contained in the enclosed copy of a paper given me by the Marquis. Monsieur Vrigny also has honorable certificates of his services, nearly corresponding with the Marquis's account of them. If Congress are pleased to honor him with a commission in the army of the States, I must try to employ him.

I took the liberty some short time ago to mention to Congress the situation of the first nine raised Virginia regiments and the term for which they stand engaged and considering that we should suffer greatly by the loss of so large a part of our force which have been long inured to service, I thought it advisable to consult the officers commanding them upon the mode which should appear to them best calculated to reinlist them. They accordingly met and reported their sentiments in writing, a copy of which I have inclosed. I do not know, that expedients more promising of success, than those they have pointed out can be adopted. Congress will be pleased to give the matter their earliest attention,

and to favor me with their opinion by the first opportunity, whether the indulgence and allowance they have proposed may be granted, and, if any additional Bounty may be given, what it shall be. The high sums paid for substitutes and drafts of late even in the Militia service, will make this necessary.—For the Soldiers being well apprised of that Fact, will not be induced to engage again during the war or for three years for the usual Premium.[1]

I would also lay before Congress a Remonstrance by the Subaltern officers of the Virginia line, founded on a reform I thought necessary to take place in the Regt. from that State.—These in their establishment were made to consist of Ten Companies—Two more than were assigned to those of the States in general. This and the great disproportion between the officers and men induced me to reduce them to a level with the rest belonging to the Continent—in order to prevent a considerable, unnecessary expence. To effect this, no new promotions are to be made in the Two extra Companies; viz: the 9th and 10th either to vacancies existing at the time of the regulation or to any future ones that may happen therein; and the Subalterns are to remain in their rank and command, till

[1] "The recruiting of our Continental battalions is a thing of so much importance that I wish it were in *my* power to point out a mode which would fully answer the end. To attempt to enlist upon the bounty allowed by Congress is fruitless, as the amazing sums given for substitutes in the militia, induces all those who would otherwise have gone into the Continental service to prefer a line in which neither duty or discipline is severe, and in which they have a chance of having the bounty repeated three or four times a year. To this fatal source is owing the ill success of recruiting from one end of the continent to the other."—*Washington to Governor Henry*, 13 November, 1777.

they can be promoted in the other eight companies, and their men incorporated. This is what they complain of. I have made a short state of facts, and wish Congress to determine upon them and the remonstrance, as they shall think proper.

At the request of Governor Clinton, I have transmitted a copy of his letter to me, giving an account of General Vaughan's expedition up the North River after the capture of Fort Montgomery, and of the destruction committed by his troops in burning Kingston and the houses and mills on the river. According to the latest advices they have returned again; and it is reported, that they have destroyed the barracks and forts, and gone to New York; but this is not confirmed.[1]

A few days ago Mr. Franks of Philadelphia, agent for the British prisoners, sent out six thousand Con-

[1] After the British had removed the chevaux-de-frise at Fort Montgomery and Fort Constitution, they passed up the river with several armed vessels commanded by Sir James Wallace, and a body of troops under General Vaughan. They burnt such shipping as they found in the river, and also houses and mills on the shore. At Esopus, on the 15th of October, a party landed, led on by General Vaughan himself, and burnt the village of Kingston. So complete was the destruction, that not more than one house escaped the flames. The reason he gave for this act was, that the people fired from the houses upon his men. He then went on board, and passed up as high as Livingston's Manor, where he likewise burnt several private dwellings and mills. Gordon says, that the people of Kingston did not fire from their houses upon the British troops.—*History*, vol. ii., p. 579. It had been agreed between General Putnam and Governor Clinton, that, during these operations of the enemy, they should move up the river with their respective forces, the former on the east side and the latter on the west, to prevent their landing and committing ravages in the country; and also to be at hand to fall upon their rear, in case they should proceed to Albany, and attempt to succor Burgoyne. When the news of the Convention of Saratoga reached General Vaughan, he retreated down the river, and soon after to New York. General Putnam had

tinental dollars to Mr. Richard Graham of Virginia, for the subsistence of the Hessians and other prisoners in that State. The policy of suffering the enemy to support their prisoners with money, which they refuse themselves, and which they attempt to depreciate in every instance they possibly can, appears to me very questionable, and the more so, as it may be counterfeited. Besides, they have laid us under every difficulty they can devise, as to our prisoners in their hands. Nothing will do for their support but hard money. If the enemy were obliged to furnish the same, the quantity with us would be greater, and of course the means of relieving ours easier. I do not

advanced with his army as far as Red Hook, but immediately returned to Fishkill. He appears to have had a strong tendency towards New York, even after the enemy had ascended above the Highlands, and wrote in that temper to General Gates, who replied:

"It is certainly right to collect your whole force, and push up the east side of the river after the enemy. You may be sure they have nothing they care for in New York. Then why should you attack an empty town, which you know to be untenable the moment they bring their men of war against it? Yesterday General Burgoyne proposed to surrender upon the enclosed terms. The capitulation will, I believe, be settled to-day, when I shall have nothing but General Clinton to think of. If you keep pace with him on one side, the Governor on the other, and I in his front, I cannot see how he is to get home again."—*MS. Letter*, October 15th.

Four days after the capture of Fort Montgomery, a spy was brought to Governor Clinton, then at New Windsor, who was seen to swallow a silver bullet. It was recovered by a prescription of tartar emetic, and found to be hollow, and to contain within its cavity the following brief message from Sir Henry Clinton to Burgoyne, dated at Fort Montgomery, October 8th.

"*Nous y voici*, and nothing now between us but Gates. I sincerely hope this little success of ours may facilitate your operations. In answer to your letter of the 28th of September by C. C. I shall only say, I cannot presume to order, or even advise, for reasons obvious. I heartily wish you success. Faithfully yours. "H. CLINTON."

Fort Montgomery was denominated *Fort Vaughan* by the British, during the twenty days that it was in their possession.—*Sparks*.

know what consequences a prohibition against receiving Continental money or the currency of any State from them might involve; I think the subject is worthy of the consideration of Congress, and for that reason I have mentioned it.

Nov. 3.—The report of the Enemy having destroyed the Forts and Barracks on the North River and of their having returned to New York is confirmed. I this morning received a letter from Genl. Putnam upon the subject, a copy of which is transmitted. The information, that they mean to reinforce Genl. Howe, I doubt not is true. It has come through several channels, and nothing is more probable. As to their having a further expedition in view, it seems to be questionable and General Burgoyne's defeat and the Eastern Troops being ready to be employed in another way are circumstances against the measure.

Agreeable to my expectation the Virginia Militia are gone, so that we have none now in aid of the Continental Troops, but those of this State mentioned in the return, and a few from Maryland. I do not know what can or will be done to obtain further reinforcements of them.—But it appears to me, taking matters in any point of light, that further aids should come from Virginia and Maryland. For should we be able to accommodate the Continental forces with Cloaths so as to carry on a Winters Campaign, their assistance will be material, either to maintain a Blockade, or in any decisive Stroke we may attempt.—And if they cannot be so provided, and we should be obliged to retire into Quarters,

their services will be still more necessary to assist in covering the country against incursions for forage and Provisions.—

The Militia of this State themselves, supposing they should be tolerably vigorous in their exertions will not be equal to the task—At least it will be difficult if not impracticable for 'em to do it. It is to be wished, that such as can be drawn out, may be engaged to serve three months or two at least, (if it can be effected) after their arrival in Camp, and that a mode could be adopted to supply their places with others at the expiration of their term, should the exigency of our affairs require it. A time for their continuance should be fixed, or they will always be uneasy & pushing off; and the longer circumstances will admit it to be, the better. For after the period incurs, for which they come, it will be impossible to retain 'em a moment. As to the number that should be required, it is difficult to determine.—However, it is likely, it will fall short of the requisition, as it ever has upon such occasions.

There is a report prevailing in Camp, which has come thro' several Channels, that a successful expedition has been made upon Rhode Island, and 800 Prisoners taken with several pieces of Artillery and a large quantity of Salt. I heartily wish it may be true—but at present it wants confirmation.

Mr. Thomson's letter of the 21st Ulto. with its enclosures came to hand yesterday—I join Congress most sincerely in congratulations on our important success in the surrender of Genl. Burgoyne at the

Head of his Forces, and am happy they have received a confirmation of the event from Genl. Gates. I have, &c.[1]

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL VARNUM.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 1 November, 1777.

SIR,

I hope this will find you arrived safe at Red Bank with your detachment. By letters from the Baron d'Arendt, who has retired for a few days to the Jersey side, for the benefit of his health, I understand that what they principally fear at Fort Mifflin is a surprise by night, or a lodgment upon the upper end of the Island, by which they may cover themselves before morning and open a battery upon the rear of the fort, which is only secured by palisadoes. The only method of guarding effectually against this, is by keeping boats stationed by night between Fort and Province Island, to give an immediate alarm; and when the weather is calm, if the galleys were to lay near the Island to be ready to begin a fire, upon the first landing of the enemy, it would harass and retard them much in their operations.

I am afraid that matters do not go on smoothly between the Commandant at Fort Mifflin and the

[1] "As soon as the Schuylkill is fordable, I shall send over a large body of militia to you, for the purpose of executing some particular matters. The principal are, to endeavor to break up the road by which the enemy have a communication with their shipping over the Islands, if it is practicable, and to remove the running stones from the mills in the neighborhood of Chester and Wilmington. This last I would have you undertake immediately with your present force, as I have information that the enemy are about making a detachment to Wilmington, probably with an intent to take post there, and secure the use of the mills."—*Washington to General Potter*, 31 October, 1777.

Commodore, as there are every now and then complaints of inattention in the Commodore; but I do not know whether with just grounds. I beg you will do all in your power to reconcile any differences, that may have arisen, not by taking notice of them in a direct manner, but by recommending unanimity and demonstrating the manifest advantages of it. As the Commodore will have a considerable reinforcement after you arrive, I hope he will be able to afford more assistance than he has hitherto done.[1]

You will have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with the Baron d'Arendt, and I must beg you will lay such plans, as will most effectually contribute to the mutual support and defence of your posts; for you are to consider, if one falls, the other goes of course. As soon as you have looked about you, and taken a survey of the ground about you, I shall be glad to have your opinion of matters, I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEADQUARTERS, 1 November, 1777.

SIR:

I think it not only incumbent upon me but a duty which I owe the public to represent to you the unaccountable conduct of Brigr. Genl. Newcomb at this

[1] "The enemy's boats pass and repass at night, carry supplies from the shipping to the town, and meet with no interruption. The cannon of the fort cannot be brought to bear upon them; random firing would be a waste of precious ammunition. The galleys alone can be opposed to their passage, which has been hitherto effected between Province Island and Fort Mifflin, under cover of darkness. What this inactivity of the galleys is owing to is unknown; some attribute it to the jealousy which commonly subsists between the officers of the naval and land service—a vitious spirit which should not be known in Republics."—*John Laurens to his father*, 5 November, 1777.

critical time. As soon as the enemy shewed a disposition to possess themselves of Billingsport and Red Bank, I wrote to him in the most urgent manner, to collect and keep up as many militia as he possibly could to assist in the defence of Red Bank in particular, till I could afford a proper Garrison of Continental Troops, and altho I recd. no very favorable accounts of his activity or exertions I imagined that he had been doing something towards it—On the 26th ulto. Genl. Forman arrived at Red Bank with a few of his own Continental Regt. and some of the mounted militia and wrote me as follows "The lower militia and a Genl. Newcomb have not as yet produced a single man. As being elder in command than Newcomb I take the liberty this day to issue orders for their immediate assembling, and will from time to time do every thing in my power to assemble them." On the 29th he writes me again "previous to the Rect. of yours of the 27th, I had given orders to several of the militia officers of this part of the Country to assemble their men and have used my endeavors with General Newcomb to obtain a return of the men it is said he has assembled, that they might be put in some duty either in the Garrison or on some out Guards, but the General absolutely refuses to render me any account of himself or his men, that I am not able to inform your Excell'y whether he really has or has not any men assembled." In another paragraph of the same letter he says "Yet I think I could be able to collect a respectable Body of Militia was I able to overcome

the obstincy of or to displace Genl. Newcomb. From the best information I can collect he has at no time given any assistance either to the Garrisons or the fleet particularly in the late attack upon Red Bank he neither harrassed the Enemy in their advance during the assault or in their Retreat. He thinks himself only accountable to the Gov. or Majr. Genl. Dickenson. I should be glad of your Excellc. directions respecting my treatment of him."

I shall make no comments but leave it to the opinions of yourself and the Gentlemen of the legislature whether such a man is fit to command in a part of the State immediately the object of the Enemy's attention and in which the most vigorous measures ought to be pursued. If you would only direct him to obey Genl. Forman as a Senior Officer, much good to the service would result from it.

I had been more than commonly pressing with Genl. Newcomb to assemble men at Red Bank, because I found by letters from Genl. Forman that scarce any part of the 2000 men ordered under his command to the reinforcement of this Army were from a variety of circumstances to be expected and therefore I should be able to afford less assistance of Continental Troops to that valuable post.

Col. Dayton will inform you of the reduction of the Regiments of your State in point of numbers and of the distress which they will labor under for want of necessaries unless some measures can be fallen upon for supplying them. These are matters which

deserve your most serious consideration and which I recommend to your attention.

It is in vain to think of filling up your Regiments by the common mode of inlistment while the pernicious practice of hiring substitutes for the Militia prevails, for what man will engage to serve during the War for a Bounty of twenty dollars, where he can get twice as much for serving one month in the militia. Some of the Eastern States and Virginia have adopted the mode of drafting, and I am told it succeeds, and was the practice universal the people would not think it a hardship. I do not mention this by way of dictating to or directing you; I only do it to shew what has been found to answer the end in other States. I am confident that could we ever be happy enough to fill the Continental Regt. we should never have occasion to trouble the Militia again.

Circumscribed as we are in our importations from abroad, the Cloathier General finds it impossible to comply with the full demands of the whole Army. It therefore becomes incumbent upon the different States to endeavor to procure the most material articles of Blankets, shoes and Stockings, at this inclement season, and I am convinced if assessments of these things were laid upon those only who do not perform military service, enough might be found to make the troops comfortable. I have repeatedly sent out Officers to make Collections, but they either do it partially or neglect it wholly; I must therefore entreat you to lay this matter before your legislature as early as

possible, and press them to make provision in such way as seems to them most likely to answer the end. I have, &c.[1]

TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 4 November, 1777.

SIR,

I have been informed by Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer, who is now a prisoner in your possession, that Major Balfour, one of your aids, had assured him, that it was your earnest desire, that a general exchange of prisoners should take place on equitable terms, or, if this could not be effected, that the officers on both sides should be released on parole. This, I have no doubt, was done by your authority, and with an intention, that it should be communicated to me. I

[1] "I am favored with yours of the 27th ulto. and am glad to find that the enemy have fallen entirely down to New York. By their doing this, and sending away a reinforcement to General Howe, it is evident that they have done with all thoughts of attempting any thing further to the Northward. Having lost one army, it is certainly their interest and intention to make the other as respectable as possible, and as their force is now nearly drawn together at one point, in Philadelphia, it is undoubtedly our plan to endeavor by an union of our forces to destroy General Howe."—*Washington to Putnam*, 4 November, 1777. To keep as large a body of the British at New York as possible, Washington directed General Dickinson to make a feint in that direction.

"Your idea of counteracting the intended reinforcements for Mr. Howe's army, by a demonstration of designs upon New York, I think an exceeding good one, and I am very desirous that you should improve and mature it for immediate execution. A great show of preparatives on your side, boats collected, troops assembled, your expectation of the approach of Generals Gates and Putnam intrusted as a secret to persons, who you are sure will divulge and disseminate it in New York; in a word, such measures taken for effectually striking an alarm in that city, as it is altogether unnecessary for me minutely to describe to you, I am in great hopes may effect the valuable purpose which you expect."—*Washington to Major-General Dickinson*, 4 November, 1777.

assure you, Sir, nothing would afford me more satisfaction, than to carry the first proposition into execution. But, lest we should still unhappily disagree about the privates to be accounted for, and that this may not operate to the prejudice of the officers, it is my wish, for their mutual relief, that their exchange may immediately take place, so far as circumstances of rank and number will apply; and if any should then remain, that they may return to their friends on parole. I am induced to mention an exchange, in preference to the other mode of release, supposing that it will be more agreeable to both parties.

While we are on this subject, I would take the liberty to suggest, that on the footing of our present agreement the colonels, who are your prisoners, cannot be exchanged, there being no officers of the like rank in your army prisoners with us. From this consideration, I am led to inquire, whether an equivalent cannot be fixed on to effect it, as has been practised in similar cases. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JEREMIAH POWELL, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS.

CAMP, AT WHITEMARSH, 5 November, 1777.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favor of the 25th ultimo, and join your honorable Board most heartily in congratulations on our success in the surrender of General Burgoyne and his army; an event of great importance, and which reflects the

highest honor upon our arms. In respect to the embarkation of the prisoners, I take it for granted, that the beneficial consequences, the British nation would derive from their arrival in England will be sufficient motives for General Howe to use every possible exertion to get them away, and that no application for that end will be necessary. For, as soon as they arrive, they will enable the ministry to send an equal number of other troops from their different garrisons to join him here, or upon any other service against the American States. I shall be sorry, if their remaining should subject you to the inconveniences, which you seem to apprehend; and, if they can be accommodated, I think, in point of policy, we should not be anxious for their early departure. As to the transports, if General Howe is in a situation to send them, it is to be presumed, they will be properly appointed with provisions and wood, the terms of convention not obliging us to furnish their prisoners for a longer time, than they continue in our hands.[1] I do not apprehend, that there will be any thing to fear from the vessels assigned for their transportation. The condition, [on] which they are to be allowed an entry, imports a truce, and no stipulations that can be made will be more obligatory. Nevertheless, prudence and the usage of nations do not only

[1] "Now if they sail in December, they may arrive time enough to take the places of others who may be out in May, which is as early as a Campaign can be well entered upon. I look upon it that their principal difficulty will arise from the want of a stock of provision for the voyage, and, therefore, although I would supply them with rations agreeable to stipulation, I would not furnish an ounce for sea store, or suffer it to be purchased in the country."— *Washington to Heath*, 5 November, 1777.

justify, but require, that every precaution should be had, previous to their being admitted into port, to prevent an infraction of treaty and any act incompatible with the design of their coming. What these precautions ought to be will naturally occur.

In fine, Sir, I do not know how far I should advise in this business, and suppose it probable, that Congress will give you their sentiments fully upon it, being possessed of all the circumstances, by a statement from General Gates, and also from General Heath. * * * I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] "This morning a heavy cannonading was heard from below and continued till afternoon; from the top of Chew's house in German Town to which place the General took a ride this morning, we could discover nothing more than thick clouds of smoak, and the masts of two vessels, the weather being very hazy."—*John Laurens to his father*, 5 November, 1777. It was an affair between the *Somerset*, *Roebuck*, and one other British vessel, and the American galleys.

As it was for Washington's interest to mislead the enemy by distorted intelligence, he drafted instructions to Major John Clark, Jr., which tell their own story: "In your next [letter for the British camp] I 'd have you mention that Gen'l. Gates, now having nothing to do to the northward, is sending down a very handsome reinforcement of Continental troops to this army, whilst he, with the remainder of them and all the New England and York militia, is to make an immediate descent on New York, the reduction of which is confidently spoke of, as it is generally supposed that a large part of Clinton's troops are detach'd to the assistance of Genl. Howe, and that Genl. Dickinson is at the same time to attack Staten Island, for which purpose he is assembling great numbers of the Jersey militia, that the received opinion in our camp is that we will immediately attack Philadelphia on the arrival of the troops from the northward; that I have prevailed upon the Legislative body to order out two thirds of the militia of this State for that purpose; that you heard great talk of the Virginia and Maryland militia coming up, and in short that the whole Continent seems determined to use every exertion to put an end to the war this winter; that we mention the forts as being perfectly secure, having sent ample reinforcements to their support."—4 November, 1777.

"The expedition to Rhode Island is just as much a secret to me as it is to you. I never was consulted upon it, or knew from whence or when it originated. You must therefore apply to Congress for direction in regard to

TO GENERAL THOMAS NELSON.

CAMP AT WHITE MARSH, 12 MILES FROM PHILADELPHIA,
8 November, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 26th ultimo, came to my hands yesterday, and merits my warmest acknowledgements. The idea you entertained of our force was unhappily but too well founded, and I now wish I had given more into your generous proposal; but the distance, and uncertainty of keeping Militia in service any length of time were obstacles under the then appearance of things, which seemed too great to be counterbalanced by the advantages of your coming which opened them to our view * * * but the glorious turn which our affairs to the Northward have since taken, makes a new plan, and Winter Campaign, if we can get our ragged and half naked soldiers clothed, indispensably necessary, as I think General Howe may be forced out of Philadelphia, or greatly distressed in his Quarters there, if we could draw a large body of Troops round the City.

the payment of the troops employed, for I cannot give the least authority for it."—*Washington to Heath*, 5 November, 1777.

"Since the General left Germantown in the middle of September last, he has been without his baggage, and on that account is unable to receive company in the manner he could wish. He nevertheless desires the Generals, Field Officers and Brigade-Major of the day, to dine with him in future, at three o'clock in the afternoon."—*Orderly Book*, 7 November, 1777.

"I have just seen a very intelligent person from Philadelphia. He has been conversant with many people who stand high in the confidence of the British officers of the first rank. He finds from all their discourse that a formidable attack is to be made upon Fort Mifflin very soon; if that fails they will be obliged to change their quarters, as they find they cannot subsist in the city without they have a free communication with their shipping."—*Washington to General Varnum*, 8 November, 1777.

The mode by which Men have lately been recruited, is hurtful in the extreme; and, unless a more effectual and less pernicious one can be adopted, I do not know where the mischief will end;—what may be the consequence. As the Assembly of Virginia is now sitting, I hope some vigorous and spirited exertions will be used to compleat the Regiments from that State; and shall I add my wishes, that it may contribute their aid towards Clothing of them, being well persuaded, unless the respective States give their assistance, we shall be in a very unhappy situation. If our Regiments were once compleated and tolerably well Armed and Clothed, the calls upon Militia afterwards would be rare; and 'till these measures are accomplished, our expenses will be enormous.

It is in vain to look back to our disappointment on the 4th Instant at Germantown. We must endeavor to deserve better of Providence, and, I am persuaded, she will smile upon us. The rebuff which the Enemy met with at Red Bank (in which Count Donop and about four or 500 Hessians were killed and wounded) and the loss of the Augusta of 64 and Merlin of 18 Guns, have, I dare say, been fully related to you, which renders it unnecessary for one to dwell on it. They are using every effort for the reduction of Fort Mifflin and we, under our present circumstances, to save it. The event is left to Heaven.

With compliments to Mrs. Nelson, Mr. Secretary, &c.

I am &c.

TO COL. THEODORICK BLAND.

HEADQUARTERS, 8 November, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor mentioning the very strong reasons you have for quitting the service, or at least obtaining leave of absence for the settlement of your affairs, which you say, and I make no doubt, are in a situation that demands your presence.

As the contest, in which we all saw the necessity of stepping forth still remains undetermined, and the event of war doubtful and uncertain, I conceive that the same motives which first called us out, now plead in the most pressing terms for our perseverance to that happy period, in which our united efforts shall effect that great design, for the accomplishment of which we were first induced to sacrifice the happiness of domestic life.

I believe the private concerns of every officer in the army will suffer in a greater or less degree by his absence, which must have been expected as a matter of course, at their first acceptance of their commissions.

As to the strictness of honor and integrity with which you have conducted yourself (having never heard the least suggestion to the contrary) I think it unnecessary to say anything on that head.

I have always endeavored to give every indulgence to officers which I thought consistent with my duty and the good of the service. In this instance I think matters had best be deferred to the close of the campaign, when your request can in either way be answered with greater propriety and precision. I am &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL CONWAY.

9 November, 1777.

SIR,

A letter, which I received last night, contained the following paragraph.

"In a letter from General Conway to General Gates he says, '*Heaven has been determined to save your country, or a weak General and bad counsellors would have ruined it.*'" I am, Sir, your humble servant.[1]

TO HENRY LAURENS, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.[2]

CAMP, AT WHITEMARSH, 10 November, 1777.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favors of the 4th and 5th instant, with their several enclosures. Among those of the former, I found the resolution you are pleased to allude to, respecting your appointment as president. Permit me, Sir, to congratulate you upon this event, and to assure you I have the most entire confidence, that I shall experience in you during your presidency the same politeness, and attention to the interests of the States, that marked the conduct of your worthy predecessor.

With respect to the views of the Navy Board for securing the frigates, the situation of the army would not admit of a compliance with them, supposing they would answer the end. I have therefore written to the Board, in the most pressing terms, to have the frigates scuttled in such a way, that they may be raised

[1] See APPENDIX.

[2] Henry Laurens was chosen President of Congress on the 1st of November, as the successor of President Hancock.

when it shall be necessary, and that in the mean time they may not be liable to injury from floating ice. I see no measure so likely to secure 'em to us, and against the enemy's attempts. I have been extremely fearful they would have possessed and employed them, with the Delaware and their batteries, on the rear of the galleys and the fort, while the ships below attacked in front. I need not point out the probable consequences of such an event; they are too obvious. The resolves, which you request to be communicated to the army, shall be published in general orders.[1] The letters for Commodore Hazelwood &c. have been put in a proper channel of conveyance.

As to the disposition of part of the northern army, my letter of the 1st contains my ideas upon the subject, and those of my general officers. I shall be sorry if the measures I have taken on this head should interfere with, or materially vary from, any plans Congress might have had in view. Their proceedings of the 5th, I presume, were founded on a supposition, that the enemy were still up the North River, and garrisoning the forts they had taken. This not being the case, and all accounts agreeing that reinforcements to General Howe are coming from York, I hope the aids I have required will be considered expedient and proper. Independent of the latter consideration, I think our exertions and force should be directed to effect General Howe's destruction, if it is possible.[2]

[1] *Journals of Congress*, 4 November, 1777.

[2] "Since the engagement at Germantown no material alteration has happened in the situation of the two armies. General Howe has withdrawn himself close within his lines round Philadelphia, and we have fallen down with the main

Among the various difficulties attending the army, the adjustment of rank is not the least. This, owing to the several modes, the several principles, that have prevailed in granting commissions, is involved in great perplexity. The officers of the Pennsylvania troops are in much confusion about it. In many instances, those who were junior in rank, from local and other circumstances, have obtained commissions older in date than those which were granted afterwards to officers, their superiors before. This, with many other irregularities, has been and is the cause of great uneasiness; and, though precedency of rank so claimed should not be supported in justice or upon any principle, we find all, having the least pretext for the title, strenuous to support it, and willing to hold a superiority. I was therefore induced to order a board of officers to take the matter under consideration. The result, respecting the field officers of this State, I now enclose, and wish Congress to adopt the regulation, which the Board have made, and to transmit me, by the earliest opportunity, commissions dated according to their arrangement. At the same time it may be proper, that there should be a resolve vacating the commissions they now have, and direct-

body of the army to this place, about 13 miles from Philadelphia. Our light parties are much nearer and cut off all communication between the country and city. I am in daily expectation of a reinforcement from the northern army, and General Howe has drawn the principal part of his force from New York. Happy would it be for the liberties of this country could a sufficient head of men be suddenly collected to give a fatal blow to the remainder of her oppressors now drawn together in such a situation that it would be impossible to make a retreat after the Delaware is rendered unnavigable by frost."— *Washington to Governor Henry*, 13 November, 1777.

ing them to be delivered to me. Their attention to this business, I trust, will be immediate; the disputes and jealousies with the officers require it.

I have enclosed the memorial of Colonel Duportail and the other engineers for their promotion, referred to me by the Board of War for my sentiments. As to the terms these gentlemen mentioned to have been proposed and agreed to when they first arrived, I know nothing of them further than the memorial states. In respect to their abilities and knowledge in their profession, I must observe they have had no great opportunity of proving them since they were in our service. However, I have reason to believe, that they have been regularly bred in this important branch of war, and that their talents, which have been hitherto, as it were, dormant, want only a proper occasion to call them forth; in which case, I have no doubt they would do themselves honor, and the States essential service. It is of great importance, too, to consider the practicability of replacing these gentlemen with persons equally qualified, if they should quit the service; and how indispensable men of skill in this branch of military science are to every army. While I am on this subject, I would take the liberty to mention, that I have been well informed, that the engineer in the northern army (Kosciuszko I think his name is) is a gentleman of science and merit. From the character I have had of him, he is deserving of notice too.[1]

[1] Kosciuszko was appointed an engineer in the Continental service, October 18, 1776, and had been constantly employed in the Northern Department, first at Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, and afterwards in the army of

I would beg leave to mention, that we are in great distress for want of money. This will be more urgent every day; and it is probable there will be a good deal of pay due the troops coming to reinforce us. General Putnam writes pressingly for a supply, and says, he is in a most disagreeable situation for want of it. I must request the attention of Congress to this subject.

Your favor of the 7th came to hand this morning. I shall pay proper attention to the enclosures. The rank of the officers of cavalry I will attempt to have settled as soon as circumstances will admit. I have nothing very interesting to communicate. The enemy have lost one of their new floating batteries; it sunk in a little time after it was launched. There has been a cannonade to-day; it still continues. I do not know the occasion, but imagine that it is between the ships and galleys. I have, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

CAMP NEAR WHITEMARSH, 11 November, 1777.

SIR,

The condition of the army for want of Cloaths and Blankets and the little prospect we have of obtaining relief according to the information I have received from the Board of War, occasion me to trouble you at this time. The mode of seizing and forcing supplies from the Inhabitants, I fear would

Generals Schuyler and Gates. He planned the encampment for the American army at Bemus Heights; and he was afterwards the principal engineer in executing the military works at West Point.

prove very inadequate to the demands, while it would certainly imbitter the minds of the People, and excite perhaps a hurtful jealousy against the Army. I have had officers out for the purpose of purchasing and making voluntary collections of necessaries and in a few instances more coercive measures have been exercised. But all these have proved of little avail. Our distresses still continue, and are becoming greater. I would therefore humbly submit it to the consideration of Congress whether it may not be expedient for them to address the several Legislative and executive Powers of the States, on this subject, as early as possible, and in the most urgent terms. It appears to me, if they were to appoint under the authority of Congress proper active agents, that many necessaries might be procured in addition to those employed on Public Acct. Besides this, I think, the exigency of our affairs requires, that they should resolve on an immediate assessment to be made on the Inhabitants. If these modes were adopted considerable aids might be derived, and in a way much less exceptionable than that of seizing by the Army. The Assemblies in many States, I believe are now sitting, and I have no doubt upon a requisition by Congress, but they will give attention to the measure.[1]

Inclosed you will receive a Copy of a Letter from Genl. Putnam, which came to hand to-day. You will

[1] "I would not wish to be partial to any part of the army; I only desire that when goods are ordered particularly to one department, that they may not be detained in another, and I must insist that this rule be invariably observed in future. You are to consider that almost the whole of our cloathing comes from

find his and Governor Clinton's opinion respecting the Fortifications necessary to be made for the security of the North River. As soon as I heard, that Warner's Militia were coming down to reinforce me I immediately wrote to countermand them, and directed that they should be retained to carry on the necessary works during the time they are to serve. My Letter on this subject was on the 9th Instant. As to the other Troops, the propriety of bringing them here, I believe is not to be questioned.—We are told through various channels that Sir Henry Clinton is coming round with all the force that can be possibly spared from New York, and it is said that those on Staten Island are withdrawn. It is added also that the Inhabitants of the former are greatly alarmed and disgusted, and that Genl. Tryon is calling on the Militia of Long Island for the defence of the city. Genl. Putnam's Letter will also evince the necessity there is for a large and immediate supply of money being sent to the Paymaster General.

I have also the Honor to transmit you a Copy of a report by a Board of Genl. Officers on the subject of Rations which I submit to the consideration of Congress—The establishment and Regulations, which they propose, appear to me to be just and necessary, supposing the Commissary's estimate to be right, which I presume is the case from the exorbitant price

the Eastward, consequently the stopping such parts as are intended for this army after a due proportion is allotted to the other departments, is highly injurious to the service. With truth it may be added that we have at this time upwards of 2000 men rendered unfit for service for want of cloaths."—*Washington to Major-General Putnam*, 11 November, 1777.

which has been & is now paid for every species of Provision. The necessity of an alteration in the former value has been long urged by many officers—and for want of it several, I believe, have left the service.

I have, &c.

P. S. By advices just received, thirty-eight transports have arrived in the Delaware with troops. They were as high up as Reedy Island yesterday. I suppose they are from New York.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL VARNUM.

HEADQUARTERS, 12 November, 1777,
5 o'clock, P.M.

DEAR SIR,

Since I wrote to you at one o'clock this day,[1] yours dated twelve last night came to hand. This has occasioned an alteration in the Sentiments of myself

[1] "I am sorry to find from yours of yesterday, that the fire of the Enemy had made so great an impression upon the works of Fort Mifflin, that you thought an evacuation would be necessary. As I have not yet heard that the measure was determined upon, I hope it is not carried into execution. If it is not, it is the unanimous opinion of a Council of General officers, now sitting, that the Fort be held to the last extremity, and to enable the Commanding officer to do this, that you immediately withdraw all the invalids and fatigued men and fill up their places with the most fresh and robust, and that the troops in garrison be often exchanged that they may by that means obtain rest. It seems a settled point, that the Enemy will not storm, while the Works are kept in tolerable repair and there is an appearance of force upon the Island, and I therefore would have you endeavor to prevail upon the Militia to go over at night, when there is cessation of firing and work till day light. You may give them the most positive assurances that it is not meant to keep them there against their consent. This would greatly relieve the Continental Troops, and by these means a great deal of work might be done. We are now thinking if there is any possibility of attacking the Enemy in reverse and thereby raising the Seige, if it can be done with any probability of success."—*Washington to General Varnum, one o'clock*, 12 November, 1777.

and the Council who find it impossible, from your representations, to give timely relief to the Fort. We therefore are now of opinion, that the Cannon and Stores ought immediately to be removed and every thing put into a disposition to remove totally at a moment's warning; but as every day that we can hold even the Island is so much time gained, I would recommend a party to be left, who might find good shelter behind the ruined works, and when they abandon, they should set fire to the Barracks and all remaining buildings. If this was done upon a flood tide, the Enemy could not come out of Schuylkill with Boats to put the fire out, or to interrupt the passage at the Garrison. If what works remain could be blown up or other ways effectually destroyed before evacuation, it would take the Enemy so much more time and labor to make a lodgement upon the Island. Be pleased to communicate this to Col. Smith and let him know I recd. his of yesterday. I hope his wound is not dangerous.[1] I am, &c.

[1] "I last night received your favor of the 10th instant, and am sorry to find the enemy's batteries had played with such success against our works. Nevertheless, I hope they will not oblige you to evacuate them. They are of the last importance, and I trust will be maintained to the latest extremity. I have written to General Varnum to afford you immediate succor, by sending fresh troops to relieve those now in garrison, and also such numbers of militia, as he may be able to prevail on to go to your assistance. With these, every exertion should be used for repairing in the night whatever damage the works may sustain in the day. The militia are principally designed for this end, and they are to be permitted to return every morning to Red Bank, if such shall be their choice. General Varnum will furnish all the fascines and palisades he can. You may rest assured, that I will adopt every means, our situation will admit of, to give you relief."—*Washington to Lieutenant-Colonel Smith*, 12 November, 1777.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 13 November, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

In my letter of the 5th in answer to yours of the 22d ultimo I mentioned, that it was not our interest to expedite the passage of the prisoners to England. Upon a review of the matter, I am more and more convinced of the propriety of the observation. The most scrupulous adherence, on the part of the enemy, to the convention of Saratoga will justify their placing the prisoners in garrisons, as soon as they arrive in Britain, and will enable the ministry to send out an equal number of troops to reinforce General Howe, or upon any other service against these States. This being the case, policy and a regard to our own interest are strongly opposed to our adopting or pursuing any measures, to facilitate their embarkation and passage home, which are not required of us by the capitulation. If by our exertions these ends are promoted, our generosity will be rewarded, in the arrival of as large a force by the end of March, or early in April, for the purposes suggested above.

These considerations lead me to observe, that it is extremely probable General Burgoyne will apply to you, or perhaps to the council of the State, to dispense with the articles of convention, so far as they respect the port for their embarkation, and to change it from Boston to some place in Rhode Island or in the Sound. I know he has received a hint upon the subject from General Howe. Should such a requisition be made, it ought not to be complied with upon

any principles whatever. It cannot be asked as a matter of right, because by the articles Boston is assigned as the port. It should not be granted as a matter of favor, because the indulgence will be attended with most obvious and capital disadvantages to us. Besides the delay, which will necessarily arise from confining them to Boston, as the place of departure, their transports in a voyage round at this season may probably suffer considerable injury, and many of them may be blown as far as the West Indies. These considerations, and others needless to be added, have struck me in so important a point of view, that I have thought it expedient to write to you by express. Captn. Vallancey, who came with General Burgoyne's despatches, left this on his return yesterday morning, and I make no doubt, in a little time after his arrival, General Burgoyne will request the port of embarkation to be altered. Independent of the impolicy of granting the requisition, it appears to me, that none have authority to do it but Congress themselves. I am, dear Sir, with great respect, &c.[1]

[1] "It has occurred to me, that should Sir William Howe still obstinately refuse to settle any equitable cartel for the exchange of prisoners, that Congress would be justified, in ordering the fulfilling the Convention of Saratoga to be delayed, until the United States received justice in that particular. At any rate, there will be very few of Genl. Burgoyne's soldiers to embark, as most of the Germans, and a great many of the British, have deserted upon their march towards Boston, and many more will yet desert."—*Gates to the President of Congress*, 10 November, 1777.

"I have never entertained the smallest idea, that General Burgoyne should be permitted to change the port of embarkation, or that the least variation of the spirit and letter of the convention would be indulged to the troops under his command. There is no doubt, but the British regiments upon their arrival in England, will be ordered to do duty there, but the Germans cannot, by the laws serve in Great Britain, or Ireland. If General Burgoyne has any sinister

TO GOVERNOR HENRY.

WHITEMARSH, 13 November, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I shall beg leave to refer you to a letter of mine, which accompanies this, and of the same date, for a general account of our situation and wants. The design of this is only to inform you, and with great truth I can do it, strange as it may seem, that the army which I have had under my immediate command, has not, at any one time since General Howe's landing at the Head of Elk, been equal in point of numbers to his. In ascertaining this, I do not confine myself to Continental troops, but comprehend militia.

The disaffected and lukewarm in this State, in whom unhappily it too much abounds, taking advantage of the distraction in the government, prevented those vigorous exertions, which an invaded State ought to have yielded; and the short term, for which their militia was drawn out, expiring before others could be got in, and before the Maryland militia (which, by the by, were few in number, and did not join till after the battle of Brandywine,) came up, our numbers kept nearly at a stand, and I was left to fight two battles, in order if possible to save Philadelphia, with less numbers than composed the army of my antagonist, whilst the world has given us at least double. This impression, though mortifying

design, what I suggested to Congress in my letter of the 10th instant, a copy of which I conclude your Excellency has received, will be a good method of delaying, if not finally preventing the execution of his project."—*Gates to Washington*, 23 November, 1777.

in some points of view, I have been obliged to encourage, because, next to being strong, it is best to be thought so by the enemy; and to this cause principally I think is to be attributed the slow movements of General Howe.

How different the case in the northern department! There the States of New York and New England, resolving to crush Burgoyne, continued pouring in their troops, till the surrender of that army; at which time not less than fourteen thousand militia, as I have been informed, were actually in General Gates's camp, and those composed, for the most part, of the best yeomanry in the country, well armed, and in many instances supplied with provisions of their own carrying. Had the same spirit pervaded the people of this and the neighboring States, we might before this time have had General Howe nearly in the situation of General Burgoyne, with this difference, that the former would never have been out of reach of his ships, whilst the latter increased his danger every step he took, having but one retreat in case of a disaster, and that blocked up by a respectable force.

My own difficulties, in the course of the campaign, have been not a little increased by the extra aid of Continental troops, which the gloomy prospect of our affairs in the north, immediately after the reduction of Ticonderoga, induced me to spare from this army. But it is to be hoped, that all will yet end well. If the cause is advanced, indifferent is it to me where or in what quarter it happens. The winter

season, with the aid of our neighbors, may possibly bring some important event to pass.

I am, sincerely and respectfully, dear Sir, &c.

TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 14 November, 1777.

SIR,

I am sorry to find, by the tenor of your letter of the 6th instant, that we still unhappily differ in our ideas of those just and reasonable terms, upon which a general exchange of prisoners might take place, and that an event so desirable is probably yet at a distance. This being the case, that relief to the unhappy, where it is practicable, may no longer be delayed, I am induced to accede to your proposition, made through Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer, "that the officers, who are prisoners of war, on both sides should be released, and have liberty to return among their friends on parole." I shall expect your answer as soon as possible upon this subject; after which I shall give immediately the necessary orders for the return of your officers to such places as you appoint. At the same time, I wish that their exchange may appear to you, as it does to me, the more eligible mode of release. Notwithstanding what I have said, if the interpretation I have given your letter does not correspond with your own meaning, and you are disposed to proceed to an exchange of all the prisoners in your possession, for an equal number of those in my hands, without regard to the dispute subsisting between us,

I shall be happy to adopt the measure. I therefore request an explanation of the third paragraph of your letter, where you say,—"Those at present prisoners with me are ready to be delivered on the shortest notice, and it rests solely with you to justify me in doing it."

In respect to the charge against Mr. Boudinot, the enclosed paper will show he has not failed to represent to Mr. Loring the wants of the prisoners in our hands. That these may be supplied, I shall upon your application grant passports to such persons, not above the rank of regimental quartermasters, as you may send out with necessaries for them.

You call upon me to redress the grievances of several of your officers and men, who, you are pleased to say, "you are well informed are most injuriously and unjustifiably loaded with irons." If there is a single instance of a prisoner of war being in irons, I am ignorant of it; nor can I find on the most minute inquiry, that there is the least foundation for the charge. On the contrary, I have every reason to believe, that your officers and men, who are prisoners with us, are experiencing a very different treatment. I wish you to particularize the cases you allude to, that relief may be had, if the complaints are well founded, and the character and conduct of the persons shall not forbid it.

Now we are upon the subject of grievances, I am constrained to observe, that I have a variety of accounts, not only from prisoners who have made their escape, but from persons who have left Philadelphia,

that our private soldiers in your hands are treated in a manner shocking to humanity, and that many of them must have perished through hunger, had it not been for the charitable contributions of the inhabitants. It is added in aggravation, that this treatment is to oblige them to enlist in the corps you are raising. The friends of these unhappy men call daily upon me for their relief, and the people at large insist on retaliating upon those in our possession. Justice demands it. However, before I could proceed to a measure my feelings recoil at, I thought it right to mention the facts to you; and I would propose, that I may be allowed to send a suitable person into the city under the usual restrictions, to examine into the truth of them.

I must also remonstrate against the maltreatment and confinement of our officers. This, I am informed, is not only the case of those in Philadelphia, but of many in New York. Whatever plausible pretences may be urged to authorize the condition of the former, it is certain but few circumstances can arise to justify that of the latter. I appeal to you to redress these several wrongs; and you will remember, whatever hardships the prisoners with us may be subjected to will be chargeable on you. At the same time it is but justice to observe, that many of the cruelties exercised towards prisoners are said to proceed from the inhumanity of Mr. Cunningham, provost-martial, without your knowledge or approbation. I am, Sir, with due respect, &c.

P. S. Just as I was about to close my letter, two

persons, men of reputation, came from Philadelphia. I transmit to you their depositions respecting the treatment they received while they were your prisoners. I will not comment upon the subject. It is too painful.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

WHITE MARSH, 12 MILES FROM PHILADELPHIA,
November 14, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the twenty sixth ultimo came to my hands in due course of post. I observe what you say respecting the renting of Claiborne's. It is not my wish to let it for any longer term than your mamma inclines to, and at no rate, for her life, unless it is perfectly agreeable to her. This I did conceive would have been the case (as I think she informed me) to you; but if it is not, I am equally well pleased. I am very well convinced that I can, when time will permit me to attend to my own business, readily rent the place for my own interest in it, as there are many that wish for it. If there is but tolerable good grounds to suspect that the distemper will get among my cattle at Claiborne's, I shall be glad if you would desire Mr. Hill, when you next write to him, to dispose of them if he can (provided he also coincides with you in opinion).

It is much to be wished that a remedy could be applied to the depreciation of our currency. I know of no person better qualified to do this than Colonel

Mason, and shall be very happy to hear that he has taken it in hand. Long have I been persuaded of the indispensable necessity of a tax for the purpose of sinking the paper money, and why it has been delayed better politicians than I must account for. What plan Colonel Mason may have in contemplation for filling up the Virginia regiments I know not, but certain I am that this is a measure that can not be dispensed with, nor ought not under any pretext whatsoever. I hope Colonel Mason's health will admit his attendance on the Assembly, and no other plea should be offered, much less received by his constituents.

It is perfectly agreeable, too, that Colonel Baylor should share part of the privateer. I have spoken to him on the subject; he still continues in the same mind, and will write to you on the subject. I shall therefore consider myself as possessing one fourth of your full share, and that yourself, Baylor, L. Washington, and I are equally concerned in the share you at first held.

The only articles of intelligence worth communicating I have written to your mamma, and refer you to that letter. We have an account, indeed, which seems to gain credit, that Weeks, with a squadron of ships fitted out of the French ports, under continental colors, had taken fifty three homeward bound West Indiamen (chiefly from Jamaica) in the English channel; that Lord Stormont was recalled from the court of France; and war expected every moment between France and Britain. God send it.

Give my love to Nelly, and be assured that with sincere regard I remain, dear Sir, your most affectionate.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

HEADQUARTERS, 15 November, 1777.

DEAR SIR:

I have duly received your several favors from the time you left me to that of the 12th inst. I approve entirely of all the steps you have taken, and have only to wish that the exertions of those you have had to deal with, had kept pace with your zeal and good intentions. I hope your health will before this have permitted you to push on the rear of the whole reinforcement beyond New Windsor. Some of the enemy's ships have arriv'd in the Delaware, but how many have troops on board I cannot exactly ascertain. The enemy have lately damaged Fort Mifflin considerably, but our people keep possession and seem determined to do so to the last extremity. Our loss in men has been but small, Capt. Treat is unfortunately among the killed. I wish you a safe return.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL CONWAY.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 16 November, 1777.

SIR,

In answer to your favor of this date, it remains with Congress alone to accept your resignation. This being the case, I cannot permit you to leave the army, till you have obtained their consent. When

that is done, I shall not object to your departure, since it is your inclination. I thank you much for your wishes for the liberty of America, and the success of our arms, and have only to add, that, in case you are permitted to return by Congress, you will have my hopes for a favorable passage, and a happy meeting with your family and friends. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR, MAJOR-GENERAL BARON DE KALB, AND BRIGADIER-GENERAL KNOX.

INSTRUCTIONS.

GENTLEMEN

You are to proceed with all convenient expedition to Fort Mercer, where by conferring with Brigadier General Varnum, Commodore Hazelwood and such other officers as you may think proper to consult—and from your own view of the ground and River, you will investigate the following Points.

1. The Practicability of hindering the Enemy from clearing the main Channel of the Chevaux de frise which now obstructs it—without having possession of Mud Island.

[1] General Conway had the day before sent his commission to Congress, and he gave as a reason to General Washington, that a longer stay in America would endanger his rank and hopes of promotion in France, adding: "Although I leave the continent, I shall ever cherish the cause for which I fought; and, if the plan I sent to Congress is accepted, I hope I shall serve the cause more effectually in another part of the world." What this plan was he does not intimate; nor is it apparent from the journals that Congress accepted his resignation, though it would seem that he retired from the army. He wrote at the same time a long, complaining, boastful, and somewhat impudent letter to Mr. Charles Carroll, which was meant for Congress, and was accordingly read in that assembly. In that letter he said: "Seven weeks ago several gentlemen wrote to me from the seat of Congress, mentioning the very extraordinary discourses held by you, Sir, by Mr. Lovell, Mr. Duer, and some other members, on account of my applying for the rank of major-general. If I had hearkened to well grounded resentment, I should undoubtedly have left the army instantly."

2. What farther aid would be required from this Army to effect the purpose above mentioned, supposing it practicable, and how should such aid be disposed—

3. Whether our Fleet will be able to keep the River, in case the Enemy make a lodgement, and establish Batteries on Mud Island.

4. Supposing the Fleet necessitated to retire, whether the Land force could maintain its present Position independently of it.

5. Whether it be practicable to take or drive away the Enemy's Floating Battery, and if either can be done, whether an obstruction may not be laid in the Channel through which she passed, so as to prevent the Passage of any vessel in future.

6. If the Fleet should be obliged to retire and Fort Mercer be invested by the Enemy, by what means could the Garrison be drawn off, or reinforced if either should be judged necessary—You will be particular in making my acknowledgements to those officers and men who have distinguished themselves in the defense of the Fort and assuring them that I have a high Sense of their gallant Conduct.

This is by no means to be understood, Gentlemen, as restraining you to the examination only of the particular points enumerated, which are intended as a memorandum—but you will in conjunction with the Commanding officers on the spot, make every such arrangement and alteration as shall appear essential—Given at headquarters, 17 November, 1777.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITEMARSH, 17 November, 1777.

SIR,

I am sorry to inform you that Fort Mifflin was evacuated the night before last, after a defence which does credit to the American arms, and will ever re-

[1] "The Generals St. Clair, Knox and Kalb returned to Camp this Evening, they are all clear in their opinions that keeping possession of the Jersey shore at or near Red Bank is of the last importance. I have therefore determined to make such an addition to the Reinforcement that marched this morning under Genl. Huntingdon that I am in hopes you will be able to give an effectual Check to the force which the Enemy at present have in Jersey. Genl. Greene

flect the highest honor upon the officers and men of the garrison. The works were entirely beat down; every piece of cannon dismounted, and one of the enemy's ships so near, that she threw grenades into the fort, and killed men upon the platforms, from her tops, before they quitted the Island. This ship had been cut down for the purpose, and so constructed that she made but a small draft of water, and by these means warped in between Fort Mifflin and the Province Island. Some complaints are made, that the captains of the galleys did not sufficiently exert themselves to drive this vessel from her station; but I shall not determine any thing upon the matter till a proper inquiry is made.

Nothing in the course of this campaign has taken up so much of the attention and consideration of myself and all the general officers, as the possibility of giving a further relief to Fort Mifflin, than what we had already afforded. Such a garrison was thrown into it, as has been found by experience capable of defending it to the last extremity; and Red Bank, which was deemed essentially necessary, not only for the purpose of keeping open the communication, but of annoying the enemy's ships and covering our own fleet, has been possessed by a considerable detachment from this army. The only remaining and practicable

will take the command of the Reinforcement—Very much will depend upon keeping possession of Fort Mercer, as to reduce it the Enemy will be obliged to put themselves in a very disagreeable situation to them and advantageous to us, upon a narrow neck of land between two Creeks, with our whole force passing upon their Rear. Therefore desire Colonel Green to hold it if possible till the relief arrives."—*Washington to General Varnum*, 19 November, 1777.

mode of giving relief to the fort was by dislodging the enemy from Province Island, from whence they kept up an incessant fire. But this, from the situation of the ground, was not to be attempted with any degree of safety to the attacking party, unless the whole or a considerable part of the army should be removed to the west side of Schuylkill to support and cover it.

To account for this, you must be made acquainted with the nature of the ground. In order to have made the attack upon Province Island, the party destined for that service, which would have been at least fifteen hundred, must have marched down the Chester road as far as the Bell Inn near Derby, and thence, turning towards Delaware, must have proceeded about four miles further through a neck of land to the Island. The enemy have a bridge at the Middle Ferry upon the Schuylkill, which is but four miles from the Bell Inn; consequently, by throwing a body of men over that bridge upon the first discovery of our design, and marching down to the Bell, they would have effectually cut off our detachment upon their return. It is true, the covering party might have consisted of a less number than the whole army; but then those remaining upon this side of the river would have been too few to have been intrusted with all the artillery and stores of the army, within twelve miles of the enemy.

There were many and very forcible reasons against a total remove to the west side of Schuylkill. Leaving all our stores at Easton, Bethlehem, and Allentown uncovered, and abandoning several of our

hospitals within reach of the enemy, first presented themselves. Another, and in my opinion a more weighty reason than either of the preceding, was the importance of supporting the post at Red Bank, upon which that at Fort Mifflin in a great measure depended, as through it we sent in supplies of men, provisions, and ammunition. The enemy, sensible of this, endeavored to dislodge us from Red Bank on the 22d last month; which, as Congress have been informed, cost them four hundred men.

Now had our army been up on the west side of the Schuylkill, they might, without any danger of an attack upon their lines, have thrown over so considerable a force into Jersey, that they might have overpowered the garrison, and, by making themselves masters of it, have reduced Fort Mifflin by famine or want of ammunition. Thus we should in all probability have lost both posts by one stroke. They might also, by taking possession of the fords upon Schuylkill, have rendered the junction of our northern reinforcements with us a very difficult, if not an impracticable matter; and, should any accident have happened to them, we should have stood a very poor chance of looking General Howe in the face through the winter, with an inferior army. We should finally have thrown the army into such a situation, that we must inevitably have drawn on a general engagement before our reinforcements arrived; which, considering our disparity of numbers, would probably have ended with the most disagreeable consequences.

It was therefore determined a few days ago to

wait the arrival of the reinforcement from the northward, before any alteration could safely be made in the disposition of the army; and I was not without hopes, that the fort would have held out till that time. That we might then have moved without endangering the stores, I had given orders for the removal of them, from the places before mentioned, to Lebanon and other places in Lancaster county, which is at any rate more safe and convenient than where they were.

As the keeping possession of Red Bank, and thereby still preventing the enemy from weighing the chevaux-de-frise before the frost obliges their ships to quit the river, has become a matter of the greatest importance, I have determined to send down General St. Clair, General Knox, and Baron Kalb, to take a view of the ground, and to endeavor to form a judgment of the most probable means of securing it. They will at the same time see how far it is possible for our fleet to keep their station since the loss of Fort Mifflin, and also make the proper inquiry into the conduct of the captains of the galleys mentioned in the former part of this letter.[1]

[1] For six days preceding the evacuation of Fort Mifflin, the fire from the enemy's batteries and shipping had been incessant. Major Fleury kept a journal of events, which was daily forwarded to General Washington, and from which the following are extracts.—"*November 10th, at noon.* I am interrupted by the bombs and balls, which fall thickly. The firing increases, but not the effect; our barracks alone suffer. *Two o'clock;* the direction of the fire is changed; our palisades suffer; a dozen of them are broken down; one of our cannon is damaged; I am afraid it will not fire straight. *Eleven o'clock at night;* the enemy keep up a firing every half hour. Our garrison diminishes; our soldiers are overwhelmed with fatigue.—*11th.* The enemy keep up a heavy fire; they have changed the direction of their embrasures and instead of batter-

I am informed that it is a matter of amazement, and that reflections have been thrown out against this army, for not being more active and enterprising than, in the opinion of some, they ought to have been. If the charge is just, the best way to account for it will be to refer you to the returns of our strength, and those which I can produce of the enemy, and to the enclosed abstract of the clothing now actually wanting for the army; and then I think the wonder will be, how they keep the field at all in

ing our palisades in front, they take them obliquely and do great injury to our north side. *At night;* the enemy fire and interrupt our works. Three vessels have passed up between us and Province Island without any molestation from the galleys. Colonel Smith, Captain George, and myself wounded. Those two gentlemen passed immediately to Red Bank.—12*th*. Heavy firing; our two eighteen-pounders at the northern battery dismounted. *At night;* the enemy throw shells, and we are alarmed by thirty boats.—13*th*. The enemy have opened a battery on the old Ferry Wharf; the walk of our rounds is destroyed, the block-houses ruined. Our garrison is exhausted with fatigue and ill health.—14*th*. The enemy have kept up a firing upon us part of the night. Daylight discovers to us a floating battery placed a little above their grand battery and near the shore. *Seven o'clock;* the enemy keep up a great fire from their floating battery and the shore; our block-houses are in a pitiful condition. *At noon;* we have silenced the floating battery. A boat, which this day deserted from the fleet, will have given the enemy sufficient intimation of our weakness; they will probably attempt a lodgment on the Island, which we cannot prevent with our present strength."

Colonel Smith was wounded on the 11th. He had gone into the barracks to answer a letter to General Varnum. A ball passed through the chimney; he was struck by the scattered bricks, and for a time remained senseless. He retired the same day to Red Bank, and the command devolved on Lieutenant-Colonel Russell, of the Connecticut line. Exhaused with fatigue and ill health, he desired soon after to be recalled. Major Thayer, of the Rhode Island line, then volunteered to take the command, which he retained from the 12th till the morning of the 16th. General Varnum wrote on the 15th, at six o'clock in the afternoon: "The fire is universal from the shipping and batteries. We have lost a great many men to-day; a great many officers are killed and wounded. My fine company of artillery is almost destroyed. We shall be obliged to evacuate the fort this night. Major Talbut is badly wounded. Major Fleury

tents at this season of the year. What stock the clothier-general has to supply this demand, or what are his prospects, he himself will inform you, as I have directed him to go to York Town to lay these matters before Congress. There are, besides, most of those in the hospitals more bare than those in the field; many remain there for want of clothes only.

Several general officers, unable to procure clothing in the common line, have employed agents to purchase up what could be found in different parts of

is wounded also. It is impossible for an officer to possess more merit, than Colonel Thayer, who commands the brave little garrison." Again, on the 16th: "We were obliged to evacuate Fort Mifflin last evening. Major Thayer returned from thence a little after two this morning. Every thing was got off, that possibly could be. The cannon could not be removed without making too great a sacrifice of men, as the Vigilant lay within one hundred yards of the southern part of the works, and with her incessant fire, hand-grenades, and musketry from the round-top, killed every man that appeared upon the platforms."—*MS. Letters.*

After the affair of Red Bank, Congress resolved, that a sword should be presented to Colonel Greene, and also to Colonel Smith, and Commodore Hazelwood, as a reward of their gallantry. The management of the fleet, however, had not been thought such, as to justify an honor of this kind to its commander. Fleury was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army. He had already received from Congress the gift of a horse, as a testimonial of their sense of his merit at the battle of Brandywine, where a horse was shot under him.—*Journals*, September 13th; November 4th, 26th.

"Enclosed is a letter to Major Fleury, whom I ordered to Fort Mifflin to serve in quality of engineer. As he is a young man of talents, and has made this branch of military service his particular study, I place a confidence in him. You will therefore make the best arrangement for enabling him to carry such plans into execution, as come within his department. His authority, at the same time that it is subordinate to yours, must be sufficient for putting into practice what his knowledge of fortification points out as necessary for defending the post; and his department, though inferior, being of a distinct and separate nature, requires that his orders should be in a great degree discretionary, and that he should be suffered to exercise his judgment. Persuaded that you will concur with him in every measure, which the good of the service may require." —*Washington to Lieutenant-Colonel Smith*, 4 November, 1777.

the country. General Wayne, among others, has employed Mr. Zantzinger of Lancaster, who has purchased to the amount of four thousand five hundred pounds, for which he desires a draft upon the Treasury Board. Enclosed you have a copy of his letter. I am not clear whether this application should properly be made to the treasury, or the clothier-general, who should charge the money to the regiments for whom the clothes are, as so much advanced to them. If the latter should appear the most proper mode, I will order it to be done. I am anxiously waiting the arrival of the troops from the northward, who ought, from the time they have had my orders, to have been here before this. Colonel Hamilton, one of my aids, is up the North River, doing all he can to push them forward; but he writes me word, that he finds many unaccountable delays thrown in his way. However, I am in hopes that many days will not elapse before a brigade or two at least will arrive. The want of these troops has embarrassed all my measures exceedingly.

18*th*. Your despatches of the 13th & 14th have this moment come to hand, they shall be attended to and answered in my next. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE, IN CONGRESS.

WHITEMARSH, 18 November, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 7th instant should not have remained so long unanswered, but for the uncertainty of Colonel Pickering's acceptance of his new appoint-

ment. He has now determined to do this, which leads me to say, that I am really at a loss to recommend a proper person as a successor to the office of adjutant-general. The gentleman I named to you some time ago, will not you say answer. I knew but little of him myself, but I understood he was well acquainted with the duty, having served much to the satisfaction of General Montgomery (a good judge) in Canada, during his long and severe campaign in 1775.

That I might know the sense of the general officers upon this point of so much importance, that is, whether any of them were acquainted with a person qualified for the discharge of the important duties of this office, I asked them collectively; but they either were not acquainted with a proper person, or did not incline to recommend any one. Colonel Lee, who was formerly recommended by Congress to fill this office, Colonel Wilkinson, Major Scull, and Colonel Innes were separately spoken of. The first is an active, spirited man, a good disciplinarian, and being, as he was, disappointed before by Colonel Pickering's unexpected acceptance of the office, may possibly look for it now. He writes a good hand, but how correctly, or with what ease, I cannot undertake to say, having had no opportunity of judging. The next gentleman, Wilkinson, I can say less of, because he has served for the most part in the northern department. General Gates I understand speaks highly of him. He is I believe a good grammatical scholar, but how diligent I know not. The next, Scull, is a

young man, but an old officer, and very highly spoken of, for his knowledge of service, strictness of discipline, diligence, and correctness. He early was brigade-major to General Thompson. The last, Innes, I know nothing of, than his being a man of spirit, good sense, and education, and recommended by General Woodford. Thus, Sir, have I, without the least view to serve an individual, given you the name of every one that has been mentioned to me, and the characters of them respectively, as far as they have been delineated.

It is a matter of no small moment to the well-being of an army, that the several departments of it should be filled by men of ability, integrity, and application; and much therefore is it to be wished, that you may be fortunate in your choice of adjutant and quarter-master generals to this army. Wadsworth has the reputation of being clever at business. In the commissary's department he was found active and understanding; but how far he may be qualified for the chief management of so extensive a department as that of quartermaster-general, I know not. Experience has already evinced in the commissarial line a change which has embarrassed the movements of this army exceedingly. I will not charge it to the measure, nor the men, but to the time it happened. This however with truth I can say, that we seldom have more than a day or two's provisions beforehand; and often as much behind, both of meat and bread. It can be no difficult matter, therefore, under these circumstances, for you or any other gentleman to conceive how much the movements of an army are

clogged and retarded. And now, whilst I am upon this subject, let me add, that I am well convinced that the salt provisions necessary for next year, and which, (for want of salt,) can only be had to the eastward, will not be provided, as the season is now far advanced, and I have heard of no proper measures being taken to lay them in.

Have you any late advices from Europe? Is there any good grounds for the report of Russians coming out?[1] And is there any expectation of a war between France and Great Britain? If these are questions, which can be answered with propriety, I shall be glad of a solution of them, and am, with sincere regard, dear Sir, &c.

[1] That is, Russian troops to join the British army. At the beginning of the war, the British government had strong expectations of obtaining military aid from Russia. This hope, however, was soon defeated. The following are extracts from letters written by the Earl of Dartmouth to General Howe :—

"His Majesty's minister at St. Petersburg having been instructed to sound the Empress how far she would be disposed, in case of necessity, to assist his Majesty with such forces as the state and security of the empire would admit, her imperial Majesty has in the fulness of her affection for the British nation, and gratitude for the benefits she received under her late difficulties, made the most explicit declaration, and given the most emphatic assurances, of letting us have any number of infantry that may be wanted."—*MS. Letter*, 5 September, 1775.

"You will see by his Majesty's speech, that mention is made of negotiations with foreign powers for auxiliary troops; but it is with great concern that I acquaint you, that our prospect of success in our transactions with the Empress of Russia, of which we had so good an expectation, is at best but doubtful, and in the present situation is a circumstance of much disappointment and embarrassment."—27 October, 1775.—Almon's *Parliamentary Register*, vol. xi., p. 304.

Notwithstanding this early decision of the point, the rumor was continued for two or three years, that reinforcements to the British army were expected from Russia, and it excited from time to time a good deal of apprehension in America.

On this subject of reinforcements, Sir William Howe had already become

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITEMARSH,
19 November, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I am favored with yours of the 14th. I could have wished that the regiments I had ordered had come on, because I do not like brigades to be broke by detachment. The urgency of Colonel Hamilton's letter was owing to his knowledge of our wants in this quarter, and to a certainty that there was no danger to be apprehended from New York, if you sent away all the Continental troops that were then with you, and waited to replace them by those expected down the river. I cannot but say there has been more delay

greatly dissatisfied. Neither his requisitions nor his anticipations had been in any degree realized, and he had even asked his recall in a letter dated October 22d, in which he wrote to Lord George Germaine: "From the little attention, my Lord, given to my recommendations since the commencement of my command, I am led to hope that I may be relieved from this very painful service, wherein I have not the good fortune to enjoy the necessary confidence and support of my superiors, but which I conclude will be extended to Sir Henry Clinton, my presumptive successor, or to such other servant as the King may be pleased to appoint. By the return therefore of the packet, I humbly request I may have his Majesty's permission to resign the command."—*Parliamentary Register*, vol. xi., p. 437. After speaking, in his *Narrative*, of his continued remonstrances for more troops, he adds: "Perhaps it was impossible for the minister to send more; such an acknowledgment would have been no reflection upon himself, and would have relieved my mind from the uneasiness it labored under in conceiving, that my opinions of the necessity of reinforcements were deemed nugatory, and that of course I had lost the confidence of those, who were in the first instance to judge of my conduct."—p. 30. Whoever reads the correspondence, as produced in Parliament, must be convinced that there is too much truth in this remark. Sir William Howe was prompt and full in laying all his plans before the ministry, with a statement of the number of men necessary to carry them into execution. His plans were approved, and the promise of adequate reinforcements was implied; but it was never fulfilled according to his anticipation, or to the encouragements thus held out.—*Sparks.*

in the march of the troops, than I think necessary; and I could wish that in future my orders may be immediately complied with, without arguing upon the propriety of them. If any accident ensues from obeying them, the fault will lie upon me and not upon you. I have yet heard nothing of Poor's or Patterson's Brigades—or of Colo. Chas. Webb's Regiment. Scannell's Brigade will be at Coryells ferry tonight or tomorrow and Lee's & Jackson's Regiments arrived here this day. Be pleased to inform me particularly of the corps, that have marched and are to march, and by what routes they are directed, that I may know how to despatch orders to meet them upon the road if necessary. I am, &c.[1]

[1] On Colonel Hamilton's return from Albany, after executing his mission to General Gates, he found, when he arrived at New Windsor, that General Putnam had not sent forward such reinforcements to General Washington, as were expected. General Putnam seems to have had a special reluctance to part with these troops, probably in consequence of his favorite project against New York. Colonel Hamilton's letter was pointed and authoritative.

"I cannot forbear confessing," he observed, "that I am astonished and alarmed beyond measure to find, that all his Excellency's views have been hitherto frustrated, and that no single step of those I mentioned to you has been taken to afford him the aid he absolutely stands in need of, and by delaying which the cause of America is put to the utmost conceivable hazard. I so fully explained to you the General's situation, that I could not entertain a doubt you would make it the first object of your attention to reinforce him with that speed the exigency of affairs demanded; but I am sorry to say he will have too much reason to think other objects, in comparison with that insignificant, have been uppermost. I speak freely and emphatically, because I tremble at the consequences of the delay, that has happened. Sir Henry Clinton's reinforcement is probably by this time with General Howe. This will give him a decisive superiority over our army. What may be the issue of such a state of things, I leave to the feelings of every friend to his country capable of foreseeing consequences. My expressions may perhaps have more warmth, than is altogether proper, but they proceed from the overflowing of my heart in a matter where I conceive this continent essentially interested.

"I wrote to you from Albany and desired you would send a thousand Con-

TO THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE MILITIA IN THE COUNTIES OF HUNTERDON, BURLINGTON, GLOUCESTER, SALEM, AND CUMBERLAND.

20 November, 1777.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW SOLDIERS:

The Enemy have thrown considerable force into your State with intent to possess themselves of the post at Red Bank and after clearing the obstructions in the Delaware make incursions into your country.—To prevent them from effecting either of these purposes I have sent over a number of Continental Troops as I trust will, with the spirited operations of the militia totally defeat their designs and oblige them to return to the City and suburbs of Philadelphia which is the only ground they possess on the Pennsylvania Shore, in which they cannot subsist cut off from the supplies of the plentiful State of New Jersey. I therefore call upon you, by all that you hold dear to rise up as one man and rid your country of its unjust invaders. To convince you

tinental troops, of those first proposed to be left with you. This I understand has not been done. How the non-compliance can be answered to General Washington, you can best determine. I now, Sir, in the most explicit terms, by his Excellency's authority, give it as a positive order from him, that all the Continental troops under your command may be immediately marched to King's Ferry, there to cross the river and hasten to reinforce the army under him. The Massachusetts militia are to be detained instead of them, until the troops coming from the northward arrive. When they do, they will replace, as far as I am instructed, the troops you shall send away in consequence of this requisition. The General's idea of keeping troops this way does not extend farther, than covering the country from any little irruptions of small parties, and carrying on the works necessary for the security of the river. As to attacking New York, that he thinks ought to be out of the question for the present. If men could be spared from the other really necessary objects, he would have no objection to attempting a diversion by way of New York, but nothing farther."—*MS. Letter, New Windsor*, November 9th.

General Putnam enclosed a copy of this letter to General Washington, and added: "It contains some most unjust and ungenerous reflections, for I am conscious of having done every thing in my power to succor you as soon as possible. I shall go to New Windsor this day to see Colonel Hamilton, and, until I have orders from you, I cannot think of continuing at this post myself, and send all the troops away. If they should go away, I am confident General Howe will be further reinforced from this quarter."

that is to be done by a general appearance of all its freemen armed and ready to give their opposition, I need only to put you in mind of the effect it had upon the British Army in June last, who laid aside their intention of marching through the upper part of your State upon seeing the hostile manner in which you were prepared to receive them. Look also at the glorious effects which followed the spirit of the union which appeared among our brethren of New York and New England, who, by the brave assistance they afforded the Continental Army obliged a royal one, flushed with their former victories to sue for terms and lay down their arms in the most submissive manner.

Reflect upon these things, and I am convinced that every man who can bear a musket will take it up and without respect to time or place give his services in the field for a few weeks, perhaps only a few days. I am your sincere friend and countryman.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITEMARSH,
23 November, 1777.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favors of the 13th and 19th instant, with their enclosures. I am well assured Congress have not been inattentive to the necessities of the army; and that the deficiency in our supplies, particularly in the article of clothing, has arisen from the difficulty of importing, on account of the numerous fleets that line our coast. However, I am persuaded that considerable relief might be drawn from the different States, were they to exert themselves properly. This I hope will be the case, as soon as they receive the pressing recommendations of Congress upon the subject.

It has been the unvaried custom of the enemy, from the commencement of the present contest, to

try every artifice and device to delude the people. The message through John Brown was calculated for this end.[1] I am surprised Mr. Willing should suffer himself to be imposed on by such flimsy measures. He knows that there is a plain, obvious way for General and Lord Howe to communicate any proposals they wish to make to Congress, without the intervention of a second and third hand. But this would not suit their views. I am sorry that Mr. Brown should have been the bearer of the message; as, from the character I have had of him, he is a worthy, well-disposed man. It has been frequently mentioned, that he had interested himself much in behalf of our prisoners, and had afforded them every relief and comfort his circumstances would allow him to give.

I have been endeavoring to effect an exchange of prisoners, upon principles of justice, and from motives of humanity; but at present I have no prospect of it. Yet General Howe has assured our officers it was his wish, and, if it could not be done, that he should readily agree to their release on parole. The enclosed copies of my letters and his answer will show Congress what has passed between us upon that subject; and, at the same time, that I had remonstrated against the severe and cruel treatment of the prisoners, and proposed the plan of sending in a suitable person to

[1] Brown had come out from Philadelphia "without a flag or pass from any general or officer in the service of the United States, pretending that he is charged with a verbal message to Congress from General Howe." Deeming such conduct good evidence of his being "employed by the enemy for purposes inimical to these states," Congress directed his arrest.—*Journals of Congress*, 18 November, 1777.

inquire into the facts, before the receipt of their resolution. Their sufferings, I am persuaded, have been great, and shocking to humanity. I have called upon General Howe for redress, and an explicit answer to my letter of the 14th. If I do not receive one by to-morrow night, with the most positive and satisfactory assurances that a proper conduct shall be observed towards them in future, we must retaliate, however much we wish to avoid severity, and measures that bear the smallest appearance of rigor or inhumanity.

Enclosed you will receive a list of sundry officers, who have been cashiered since the action of the 4th ultimo. I flatter myself, that these examples will involve many favorable and beneficial consequences. Besides these, there were many more brought to trial, who were acquitted; among them, General Maxwell and General Wayne, the former for charges against him while he commanded the light troops, the latter for charges against his conduct in the attack made on his division in the night of the 20th of September. The result of the court of inquiry against General Wayne not entirely exempting him from censure in his own opinion, he requested a court-martial; and, upon a full and minute investigation of the charges against him, he was honorably acquitted, and in terms of high respect.

I am sorry to inform Congress, that the enemy are now in possession of all the water defences. Fort Mifflin and that at Red Bank mutually depended on each other for support; and the reduction of the

former made the tenure of the latter extremely precarious, if not impracticable. After the loss of Fort Mifflin, it was found Red Bank could derive no advantages from the galleys and armed vessels; (they could not maintain their station;) and, in case of investiture, the garrison could have no supplies, no retreat, nor any hope of relief, but such as might arise from a superior force acting without on the rear of the enemy, and dislodging them. Under these circumstances, the garrison was obliged to evacuate it on the night of the 20th instant, on the approach of Lord Cornwallis, who had crossed the river from Chester with a detachment, supposed to be about two thousand men, and formed a junction with the troops lately arrived from New York, and those that had been landed before at Billingsport.

From General Varnum's account, I have reason to hope that we saved most of the stores, except a few heavy cannon; however, I cannot be particular in this instance. I am also to add, from the intelligence I have received, that most if not all the armed vessels have been burned by our own people, except the galleys, one brig, and two sloops, which are said to have run by the city. How far this might be founded in necessity, I am not able to determine; but I suppose it was done under that idea, and an apprehension of their falling into the enemy's hands if they attempted to pass up the river.

Upon the first information I had of Lord Cornwallis's movement, I detached General Huntington's brigade to join General Varnum, and, as soon as pos-

sible, General Greene with his division; hoping that these, with Glover's brigade, which was on the march through Jersey, and which I directed to file off to the left for the same purpose, and with such militia as could be collected, would be able to defeat the enemy's design, and preserve the fort. But they were so rapid in their advances, that our troops could not form a junction and arrive in time to succor the garrison; which obliged them to withdraw. General Greene is still in Jersey; and, when Glover's brigade joins him, if an attack can be made on Lord Cornwallis with a prospect of success, I am persuaded it will be done. About a hundred and seventy of Morgan's corps are also gone to reinforce him.[1] Generals

[1] The remainder of Morgan's corps was rendered unfit to march by the want of shoes. There was much suffering in the army generally on this account. The following is an extract from the Orderly Book.

"The Commander-in-chief offers a reward of ten dollars to any person, who shall by nine o'clock on Monday morning produce the best substitute for shoes, made of raw hides. The commissary of hides is to furnish the hides, and the major-general of the day is to judge of the essays, and assign the reward to the best artist."—November 22d.

A council of war was called, on the evening of the 24th of November, to consider the question of making an immediate attack on the enemy in Philadelphia. While Lord Cornwallis was absent in New Jersey with so large a body of troops, it was supposed by some that a fit opportunity presented itself for making a successful attack. General Washington had reconnoitred the enemy's lines in person with this view. The subject was debated with earnestness, and, as there was a difference of opinion among the members of the council, they separated without coming to any decision. At the request of the Commander-in-chief, each officer sent in his written opinion the next morning, with his reasons. During the night a messenger was likewise despatched to General Greene in Jersey, who communicated his views in writing. The result was, that eleven officers were opposed to the attack, and four in favor of it. Those in the affirmative were Stirling, Wayne, Scott, and Woodford; in the negative, Greene, Sullivan, Knox, Baron de Kalb, Smallwood, Maxwell, Poor, Paterson, Irvine, Duportail, and Armstrong.

The plan suggested for the attack is thus described by Lord Stirling:

Poor and Paterson, with their brigades, and Colonel Bailey with Learned's, are now in camp. The last arrived on Friday evening, the other two in the course of yesterday. I have not yet obtained returns of their strength; but, from the accounts of the officers, they will amount in the whole to twenty-three or

"1. That the enemy's lines on the north side of Philadelphia should be attacked at daylight by three columns properly flanked and supported. 2, That two thousand men should be drawn from General Greene and embarked in boats at Dunks's Ferry, proceed to Philadelphia, land at or near Spruce Street, push through the Common, and endeavor with a part to secure the bridge over the Schuylkill, and with the remainder to attack the enemy in the rear of their lines. 3. That five hundred of the Continental troops, with the militia under General Potter, should possess such of the hills on the other side of the Schuylkill as command and enfilade the enemy's lines; and while part of them carry on a brisk cannonade at that place, the rest proceed to the bridge over the Schuylkill, and wait an opportunity of attacking the works there in front, when the party from Spruce Street make an attack in the rear."

Such was the outline of the plan of attack, but it was by no means satisfactory to the majority of the officers. The enemy's lines on the north side of the city, from river to river, were sustained by a chain of fourteen redoubts, strengthened by *abatis* in some parts and by circular works in others. Each of the enemy's flanks was moreover protected by a river, and the rear by the union of two rivers. To attack an army under such circumstances, without the greatest hazard of a failure, would require a large superiority of force, and the best disciplined troops; but in the present case, the enemy's force was almost equal in numbers to that under Washington, and in point of discipline and experience far superior. These considerations, with others of a similar tendency, were deemed sufficient to discourage an attack.

"Our Commander in chief wishing ardently to gratify the public expectation by making an attack upon the enemy—yet preferring at the same time a loss of popularity to engaging in an enterprise which he could not justify to his own conscience and the more respectable part of his constituents, went yesterday to view the works. A clear sunshine favored our observations: we saw redoubts of a very respectable profit, faced with plank, formidably fraised, and the intervals between them closed with an abbatis unusually strong. General du Portail declared that in such works with five thousand men he would bid defiance to any force that should be brought against him. . . . Every man of experience and judgment thinks it would be madness with our force to make an attempt on the enemy in their present situation."—*John Laurens to his father*, 26 November, 1777.

twenty-four hundred rank and file. But I find many of them are very deficient in the articles of shoes, stockings, breeches, and blankets. Besides these, about three hundred and fifty men, detachments from Lee's, Jackson's, and Henley's regiments, have joined me. Yesterday evening the enemy burned several houses in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, and they have committed the most wanton spoil in many others. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

26 November, 1777.

My letter of yesternight (wrote after I returned from a view of the enemy's lines from the other side Schuylkill) I must refer to. Our situation, as you justly observe, is distressing from a variety of irremediable causes, but more especially from the impracticability of answering the expectations of the world without running hazards which no military principles can justify, and which, in case of failure, might prove the ruin of our cause; patience, and a steady perseverance in such measures as appear warranted by sound reason and policy, must support us under the censure of the one, and dictate a proper line of conduct for the attainment of the other; that is the great object in view. This, as it ever has, will I think, ever remain the first wish of my heart, however I may mistake the means of accomplishment; that your views are the same, and that your endeavors have pointed to the same end, I am perfectly satisfied

of, although you seem to have imbibed a suspicion which I never entertained.

I can foresee inconveniences, I can foresee losses, and I dare say I may add that I can foresee much dissatisfaction that will arise from the withdrawing the Continental troops from the Jerseys. But how is it to be avoided? We cannot be divided when the enemy are collected. The evils which I apprehended from throwing troops into the Jerseys now stare me more forcibly in the face, and a day or two, if you cannot join us in that time, may realize them; for my mind scarce entertains a doubt but that General Howe is collecting his whole force with a view to pushing at this army. This, especially under the information you have received of Lord Cornwallis's recrossing the Delaware, induces me to press despatch upon you, that our junction may be formed as speedily as possible, and the consequences of a division avoided.

The current sentiment, as far as I can collect it, is in favor of our taking post the other side Schuylkill; in this case the Jerseys will be left totally uncovered; consequently all the craft in the river, with their rigging, guns, &c.; the hospitals on that side of the river, the magazines of provisions which the commissaries are establishing in the upper part of Jersey, &c. Think, therefore, I beseech you, of all these things, and prepare yourself by reflection and observation (being on the spot) to give me your advice on these several matters. The boats (those belonging to the public, and built for the purpose of transporting troops, &c. across the river) ought in my judgment

to be removed, as soon as they have served your present calls, up to Coryell's Ferry at least, if not higher. I am also inclined to think (if we should cross the Schuylkill) that they ought to be carted over also.

It has been proposed that some of the galleys should fall down to or near the mouth of Frankfort creek, in order to prevent troops from coming up by water, and falling in the rear of our pickets near the enemy's lines; will you discuss with the Commodore on this subject? Will you also ask what is become of the hands that were on board the vessels which were burnt.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 26 November, 1777.

SIR,

I was yesterday morning honored with your favors of the 22d instt. I wish the measures Congress have adopted may effectually suppress the disturbances in the western department. Should they prove successful, and the savages and wicked, deluded inhabitants receive a severe check, it is probable they will not be induced again to take part against us, or at least for some considerable time. Colonel Crawford set out yesterday evening, and will be with Congress, I expect, in the course of two or three days to take their commands. I was much obliged by the foreign intelligence you were pleased to transmit to me; it is

[1] From Greene, *Life of Nathanael Greene*, i., 529.

agreeable and interesting; and I heartily wish there may be an early declaration of hostilities between France and Britain. From these advices, things seem to be getting into a proper train for it; and it is not easily to be conceived, that it can be much longer delayed. However, our expectations have not been answered in this instance, and they may yet be held in suspense. The political reasons, that lead to delay on the part of France, I do not perfectly understand. As to Britain, her honor is lost in the contest with us, and the most indignant insults will scarcely be able to draw her attention from her present pursuits. The account of Mr. Lee having effected the purpose of his embassy at the court of Berlin is of great importance, if it be true. In such case, administration, however desirous they may be, will probably be disappointed in their schemes of further mercenary aids against us.[1]

I must take the liberty to request the decision of Congress on the case of the nine first raised Virginia regiments, as early as circumstances will permit. If the plan proposed for reënlisting them is judged expedient, one capital inducement to that end, suggested by the officers, will cease if it is longer delayed. It is a matter of considerable importance, and of which I wish to be satisfied as soon as possible. I should also be happy in their determination respecting the Marquis de Lafayette. He is more and more

[1] Mr. Arthur Lee's embassy to the court of Berlin did not turn out to be so successful as was anticipated. He received fair words and civil treatment, but little else. See his letters on the subject, in the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, vol. ii., pp. 65, 68, 70, 76, 87, 103, 197.

solicitious to be in actual service, and is pressing in his applications for a command. I ventured before to submit my sentiments upon the measure, and I still fear a refusal will not only induce him to return in disgust, but may involve some unfavorable consequences. There are now some vacant divisions in the army, to one of which he may be appointed, if it should be the pleasure of Congress. I am convinced he possesses a large share of that military ardor, which generally characterizes the nobility of his country. He went to Jersey with General Greene, and I find he has not been inactive there. This you will perceive by the following extract from a letter just received from General Greene:—

The Marquis, with about four hundred militia and the rifle corps, attacked the enemy's picket last evening, killed about twenty, wounded many more, and took about twenty prisoners. The Marquis is charmed with the spirited behavior of the militia and rifle corps; they drove the enemy about half a mile, and kept the ground until dark. The enemy's picket consisted of about three hundred, and were reinforced during the skirmish. The Marquis is determined to be in the way of danger.[1]

[1] The Marquis de Lafayette was not yet entirely recovered from his wound, and had only joined the army just in time to engage in this expedition as a volunteer. At his request, General Greene gave him permission to reconnoiter Lord Cornwallis, and make an attack if circumstances would warrant it. Cornwallis was then in the act of sending his troops across the river at Gloucester. In reconnoitring, Lafayette advanced so near the enemy, that he was discovered on a sandy point near the mouth of a creek, which empties itself into the Delaware at Gloucester. A small detachment of dragoons was sent off to intercept him, which he saw across the creek. His guide was frightened, but soon became sufficiently collected to direct him into a back path, which took him out of the reach of the dragoons, before they could advance to the bridge. He was obliged, also, to pass within musket-shot of an out-post; but he escaped uninjured, and joined his detachment.

On the same day, that Congress received the above letter from General

By a letter from General Howe to General Burgoyne, which passed through my hands, he hinted that liberty might probably be granted for the prisoners to embark at Rhode Island, or some part of the Sound. This indulgence appearing to me inadmissible, I immediately wrote to General Heath to prevent him giving the least countenance to the measure, in case it should be requested; and also to the Council of Massachusetts State and General Gates, lest he should extend his applications to them. The reasons, I am persuaded, will at once occur to Congress for my conduct in this instance, as well as for General Howe's; and I have been induced to mention it here, on a supposition that General Burgoyne may address them on the subject. If the embarkation is confined to Boston, it is likely that it will not take place before some time in the spring, or at least till towards the end of February; whereas, if it were allowed at either of the other places, it might be made this month or the beginning of next, and the troops arrive in Britain by the month of January; a circumstance of great importance to us, as, the moment they get there, the most scrupulous and virtuous observance of the con-

Washington, they voted that it would be highly agreeable to Congress for him to appoint the Marquis de Lafayette to the command of a division in the Continental army.—*Journals*, December 1st. Three days afterwards it was proclaimed in public orders, that he was to take command of the division recently under General Stephen, who had been dismissed from the army. That the Marquis had already made a favorable impression in the country, may be inferred from a letter written by Patrick Henry to Washington, in which he says: "I take the liberty of enclosing to you two letters from France to the Marquis de Lafayette. One of them is from his lady, I believe. I beg to be presented to him in the most acceptable manner. I greatly revere his person and amiable character."—December 6th.—*Sparks*.

vention will justify the ministry in placing them in garrison, and sending others out to reinforce General Howe, or upon any other expedition, that they may think proper to undertake against us. Besides, compelling their transports to perform a long coasting voyage, at a tempestuous season, may bring on the loss of many, and be the means of deferring the embarkation for a long time.

I must request you to transmit me a number of blank commissions as soon as you have an opportunity to do it. There are several vacancies yet to fill, and the officers entitled to 'em are anxious to be appointed. The Commissions I want should be under your signature and not Mr. Hancock's. I mention this lest you should find any of the latter that might remain. Those signed by you will be competent to all cases. Those by Mr. Hancock only to such as happened during his Presidency, and of those I now have some.

November 27th.—Enclosed you will receive a copy of General Howe's letter in answer to mine of the 14th and 23d, which only came to hand last night, and at an instant when I was giving the commissary of prisoners instructions forthwith to confine a number of the officers in our hands, and to put the privates under very different restrictions from those they have been used to. I am in hopes the treatment of ours will be much better in future. Mr. Boudinot will immediately take measures for releasing the officers on parole, that we may relieve an equal number of ours. I should have been happy to have

effected a general exchange, or a partial one; but General Howe will not upon any terms but those he has ever insisted on.[1] The enemy have got up several of their ships to the city. It is likely they have found a passage through the chevaux-de-frise, or they may have removed one of them. I have the honor, &c.[2]

[1] "I have sent Mr. Boudinot to examine into the state and wants of the prisoners, who are in Philadelphia, and request that he may obtain your permission for the same. He will also have an opportunity of agreeing with your commissary, upon the form and terms of parole for the officers to be mutually released, which I presume may not be improper, in order to prevent any misunderstanding on that head. Passports shall be granted for the commissaries or quartermasters you may appoint to carry supplies to the prisoners in our hands, when you choose to apply for them. Two will only be necessary; one for the person assigned to go to the eastward, the other for the officer having supplies for the prisoners in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. Mr. Boudinot will also inform your commissary of the proportion of prisoners in each quarter. . . .

"In a word, I shall be happy, as I ever have been, to render the situation of all prisoners in my hands as comfortable as I can; and nothing will induce me to depart from this rule, but a contrary line of conduct to those in your possession. Captivity of itself is sufficiently grievous, and it is cruel to add to its distresses. I am, &c."—*Washington to Sir William Howe*, 28 November, 1777.

[2] In writing to his brother, November 26th, General Washington said: "Had the reinforcement from the northward arrived but ten days sooner, it would, I think, have put it in my power to save Fort Mifflin, which defended the chevaux-de-frise; and consequently have rendered Philadelphia a very ineligible situation for them this winter. They have also received a reinforcement from New York, but not quite so large, I believe, as ours. With truth I may add, that, till within these few days, I have never (notwithstanding the numbers given me by the world, and which it was not my interest to contradict) had so many men in the field, under my immediate command, as General Howe has had under his, although we have fought him twice, and prevented him hitherto from obtaining other advantages, than that of possessing himself of the city; which, but for the eclat it is attended with, brings no solid advantage to their arms. The militia, which have been called upon in aid of our troops (Continental I mean), have come out in such a manner, that, before you could get a second class of them, the first were always gone; by which means, although the sound of them was great, you never could increase your real numbers and strength."

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 28 November, 1777,
7 o'clock P. M.

DEAR SIR,

Captain Duplessis has just delivered to me yours of this morning from Burlington. Every account from Philadelphia confirms the report, that the enemy mean to make a speedy move. I shall not be disappointed if they come out this night or very early in the morning. You will therefore push forward the rear brigades with all possible expedition, and, the moment that the troops and baggage have all passed, let the boats be instantly sent up the river to Coryell's Ferry; for one part of my information is, that the enemy are preparing to send boats up the Delaware, and it cannot be for any other purpose, than to destroy the remainder of our water-craft. I shall be glad that you would come on immediately upon the receipt of this, and send word back to the brigadiers to hasten their march. I am, &c.[1]

If Genl. Greene should not be found Genl. Varnum or Huntingdon will be pleased to do what is directed above and send word to the Captains of the gallies to fall lower down the river, to meet any boats that may be coming up to annoy the passage of the troops or baggage.

[1] General Greene remained a week only in Jersey. His troops were already recrossing the Delaware at Burlington, on their way to the main army, when the above letter was written. As Fort Mercer had been evacuated, and all the posts on the river given up, and as Lord Cornwallis with his detachment had crossed over to Philadelphia, there was no longer any object to be gained by a large force in Jersey. General Washington's intelligence, as to the designs of

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, WHITE MARSH,
1 December, 1777.

SIR,

On Saturday I had the Honor to receive your Favor of the 26th Ulto. with its Inclosures.

The Resolve of the 25th I have published in Orders agreeable to direction, and shall be happy if Congress can fall upon measures to render the situation of the Officers & Soldiery more eligible than what it now is. At present it is truly distressing and unless some means can be devised to support them more comfortably, we shall have to apprehend the most alarming consequences. The officers or at least a large proportion of them, as well as the Men are in a most disagreeable condition as to Cloathing, and without any certain prospect of relief;—And what is still more painful, if perchance they have an

the enemy, was well founded. In a despatch to the minister, dated November 27th, Sir William Howe said: "A forward movement against the enemy will immediately take place, and I hope will be attended with the success, that is due to the spirit and activity of his Majesty's troops."—*Parliamentary Register*, vol. xi., p. 440.

General Dickinson made a descent upon Staten Island, November 27th, with about fourteen hnndred men. He landed before day at Halstead's Point in three divisions, which marched into the Island seven miles and met at the appointed place of rendezvous. It was then ascertained, that the main body of the enemy, under Generals Skinner and Campbell, had escaped. Intelligence of the intended incursion had been received by General Skinner at three o'clock in the morning, which had given him time to draw off his troops. General Dickinson returned without effecting his object, but he received the approbation of the Commander-in-chief for his enterprise, and the judicious manner in which his plan had been laid. In the skirmishes on the Island, five or six of the enemy were killed and twenty-four taken prisoners. His own loss was three men taken and two wounded.—*General Dickinson's MS. Letter*, November 28th.

opportunity of purchasing, which is seldom the case, they have the mortification to find themselves totally incompetent to it, from the depreciation of our Money and the exorbitant prices demanded for all Articles in this way. This is the source of great uneasiness—of indifference to the service—and of repeated, I may say, daily application to leave it—and these too, by as good officers as are in the American line. In respect to promotions for merit and intrepidity, I would beg leave to observe, that tho these are proper considerations to found them upon, yet they should be made with the greatest caution & attention, and only in cases of the most eminent and distinguished services. Every promotion or rise out of common course cannot fail to excite uneasiness in a greater or lesser degree, and nothing will reconcile them to the army at large, and particularly the officers more immediately affected by them but where the causes are known and acknowledged. This I mention from my wishes to promote the public interest from my knowing that Harmony is essential to this end, and from no other motives whatever.

Before the receipt of your Favor, I do not recollect to have heard of John Simper's case. His Brother has not been with me,—as soon as he arrives, I shall give directions for him to be released from his present confinement and to be forwarded to Cecil County.

I have nothing material to inform you of. Lord Cornwallis and the Detachment under his command mentioned in my last, returned from Jersey on Thursday. We had reason to expect an Attack

since from our advices from the City but have been disappointed. Genl. Greene has also joined me with all the Troops that were with him, except Huntington's Brigade, which will be in to-day. I have, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 2 December, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

The importance of the North River in the present contest, and the necessity of defending it, are subjects which have been so frequently and so fully discussed, and are so well understood, that it is unnecessary to enlarge upon them. These facts at once appear, when it is considered that it runs through a whole State; that it is the only passage by which the enemy from New York, or any part of our coast, can ever hope to coöperate with an army from Canada; that the possession of it is indispensably essential to preserve the communication between the eastern, middle, and southern States; and, further, that upon its security, in a great measure, depend our chief supplies of flour for the subsistence of such forces, as we may have occasion for, in the course of the war, either in the eastern or northern departments, or in the country lying high up on the west side of it. These facts are familiar to all; they are familiar to you. I therefore request you, in the most urgent terms, to turn your most serious and active attention to this infinitely important object. Seize the present opportunity, and employ your whole

force and all the means in your power for erecting and completing, as far as it shall be possible, such works and obstructions as may be necessary to defend and secure the river against any future attempts of the enemy. You will consult Governor Clinton, General Parsons, and the French engineer, Colonel Radière, upon the occasion. By gaining the passage, you know the enemy have already laid waste and destroyed all the houses, mills, and towns accessible to them. Unless proper measures are taken to prevent them, they will renew their ravages in the spring, or as soon as the season will admit, and perhaps Albany, the only town in the State of any importance remaining in our hands, may undergo a like fate, and a general havoc and devastation take place.

To prevent these evils, therefore, I shall expect that you will exert every nerve, and employ your whole force in future, while and whenever it is practicable, in constructing and forwarding the proper works and means of defence. They must not be kept out on command, and acting in detachments to cover the country below, which is a consideration infinitely less important and interesting. I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] General Washington wrote at the same time to Governor Clinton, with a good deal of solicitude, on this subject. "General Gates was directed by Congress," he remarked, "to turn his views to this matter; but, from some proceedings, that have just come to hand, he may be employed in the Board of War, if it should be his choice. Should this be the case, nothing would be more pleasing to me, and I am convinced nothing would more advance the interest of the States, than for you to take the chief direction and superintendence of this business; and I shall be happy if the affairs of government will permit you. If they will, you may rest assured, that no aid in my power to afford you

TO JOSEPH REED.

WHITEMARSH, 2 December, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

If you can with any convenience, let me see you to-day, I shall be thankful for it. I am about fixing the winter cantonments of the army; and find so many and such capital objections to each mode proposed, that I am exceedingly embarrassed, not only by the advice given me, but in my own judgment, and should be very glad of your sentiments on the matter without loss of time. In hopes of seeing you, I shall only add, that from Reading to Lancaster inclusively, is the general sentiment, whilst Wilmington and its vicinity has powerful advocates. This, however, is mentioned under the rose; for I am convinced in my own opinion, that if the enemy believed we had this place in contemplation, they would possess themselves of it immediately. I am very sincerely, dear sir, yours affectionately.

shall be withheld, and there are no impediments on the score of delicacy or superior command, that shall not be removed." To this proposal, Governor Clinton replied: "The legislature of this State [New York] is to meet on the 5th of next month. The variety of important business to be prepared for their consideration, and other affairs of government, will employ so great a part of my time, that I should not be able to give that attention to the works for the security of the river, which their importance, and the short time in which they ought to be completed, require. But you may rest assured, Sir, that every leisure hour shall be faithfully devoted to them, and my advice and assistance shall not on any consideration be withheld from the person, who shall be intrusted with the chief direction."—*MS. Letter*, December 20th. The same letter contains several important hints respecting the construction of new works on the river, and he especially recommends, that a "strong fortress should be erected at West Point, opposite to Fort Constitution." This was probably the first suggestion, from any official source, which led to the fortifying of that post.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 2 December, 1777.

SIR,

I was yesterday favored with yours of the 23d of November, and am glad to find that you were upon your guard against any attempt of General Burgoyne to endeavor to change the place of embarkation. No transports have yet sailed from the Delaware, for the purpose of carrying the troops to Europe, nor do I hear that any have gone from New York. I can only attribute this delay to want of provision for the voyage. Bread we know is exceedingly scarce among them.

By a resolve of Congress of the 5th of November, (copy of which I perceive, by the Resolve itself has been transmitted to you) you are directed, with a certain part of the northern army and the assistance of the militia of New York and the eastern States, to attempt the recovery of the posts upon the North River from the enemy, and to put them, if recovered, in the best posture of defence. The enemy having themselves vacated Forts Montgomery and Clinton, while the resolve was in agitation, but of which the Congress could not at the time be informed, the first part falls of course; but the last deserves our most serious attention, as upon the possession of the North River depends the security of all the upper part of the government of New York, and the communication between the eastern, middle, and southern States. It is also the quarter, in which the enemy will probably attempt a diversion in the spring; as, from the small

force they have remaining in Canada, there is not a possibility of their doing any thing on that side, till very late in the campaign, if at all. My not having heard from you, what steps you have taken towards carrying the resolve for repairing the old works, or building new into execution, or when you might be expected down into that part of the country, has made me hitherto delay recalling General Putnam from the command. But I beg leave to urge to you the necessity of your presence in that quarter, as speedily as possible; for I fear few or no measures have yet been taken towards putting matters in a proper train for carrying on these important works. General George Clinton will necessarily be employed in the affairs of his government; but I have wrote to him, sir, and I am certain he will call for and contribute all the aid, that the State of New York can possibly afford. You are vested by the resolve of Congress with authority to demand a proportionable share of assistance from the eastern States. I observe by a paragraph in the Fishkill paper of some days later date than your letter, that the Enemy had evacuated Ticonderoga, and Independance. If this should have happened, it will not only relieve your attention from that object, but it will enable you to draw the Force which you might have intended to watch the operations of the Enemy in that quarter, lower down the River.

Lieut Colo. Willet, who was here a few days ago, mentioned that Gansevoort's Regiment was at Fort Schuyler, and Van Schaik's at Schenectady. He

seemed of opinion from his knowledge of that country and from the disposition of the Indians since your success to the Northward, that a much less Garrison than the whole of Ganservoort's Regt. would be sufficient for Fort Schuyler and that the remainder of that and Van Schaick's might be brought down the Country. Your own Knowledge and Judgment will undoubtedly point out the propriety & safety of such a measure. I barely mention Colo. Willet's opinion of the matter.

You must be so well convinced of the importance of the North River that nothing more need be said to induce you to set about the security of it with the greatest vigour. I sometime ago sent up Lt. Colo. La Radiere to Fishkill to assist in carrying on the Works, but if he, with the Gentleman who was before with you should not be sufficient, I can send up another who I believe is a master of his profession.

General Howe has withdrawn himself close within his lines, which extend from the Upper Ferry upon the Schuylkill to Kensington upon the Delaware; they consist of a chain of strong redoubts connected by *abatis*. We have reconnoitred them well, but find it impossible to attack them while defended by a force fully equal to our own in Continental troops. The reinforcement from New York unluckily arriving before ours from the northward, it was out of my power to afford adequate relief to Fort Mifflin, which fell after a most gallant defence of seven weeks. The works upon the Jersey shore, which were of no great consequence after the reduction of Fort Mifflin,

were evacuated, as it would have been impossible to support the garrison there. We have not yet determined upon a position for the army during the winter. That situation will undoubtedly be most eligible, which will afford best cover to the troops, and will at the same time cut off the enemy from resources of provision, which they may probably stand in need of when the navigation of Delaware is obstructed by the ice. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITEMARSH,
10 December, 1777.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you, that in the course of last week, from a variety of intelligence, I had reason to expect that General Howe was preparing to

[1] "I hope the exertions of our Friends in your House of Assembly will be attended with the desired effect. Unless we can fill our Regiments against the next Campaign, I very much fear that all our past labors will have been in vain, for unless a war with France should divert the attention of Great Britain, I am convinced she will strain every nerve to make up for the disappointment and losses of this Campaign. And altho' from many of our late accounts it should seem as if a war was inevitable, we ought not to count upon that score, but make our preparations as if we were to depend solely upon our own bottoms.

"The question you ask respecting the strength of our army is of so important a nature, that altho' I have the fullest confidence in you I dare not trust the particulars to paper for fear of accidents. Thus much I can assure you that our numbers have been always much exaggerated, and that the enemy have constantly exceeded our Continental force. . . . The officers who commanded at Red Bank and Fort Mifflin were Col. Green, of Rhode Island, and Lt. Col. Smith of Maryland. They did all that brave men could do, but the posts at length fell, being overpowered by dint of superior force. They, however, confess that the long and unexpected opposition which they received broke in upon their plans for the remainder of the Campaign."—*Washington to General Nelson*, 10 December, 1777.

give us a general action. Accordingly, on Thursday night he moved from the city with all his force, except a very inconsiderable part left in his lines and redoubts, and appeared the next morning on Chesnut Hill, in front of, and about three miles distant from, our right wing. As soon as their position was discovered, the Pennsylvania militia were ordered from our right, to skirmish with their light advanced parties; and I am sorry to mention, that Brigadier-General Irvine, who led them on, had the misfortune to be wounded and to be made prisoner. Nothing more occurred on that day.

On Friday night the enemy changed their ground, and moved to our left, within a mile of our line, where they remained quiet and advantageously posted the whole of the next day. On Sunday they inclined still further to our left; and, from every appearance, there was reason to apprehend they were determined on an action. In this movement, their advanced and flanking parties were warmly attacked by Colonel Morgan and his corps, and also by the Maryland militia under Colonel Gist. Their loss I cannot ascertain; but I am informed it was considerable, having regard to the number of the corps who engaged them. About sunset, after various marches and countermarches, they halted; and I still supposed, from their disposition and preceding manœuvres, that they would attack us in the night or early the next morning; but in this I was mistaken. On Monday afternoon they began to move again, and, instead of advancing, filed off from their right; and

the first certain account that I could obtain of their intentions was, that they were in full march towards Philadelphia by two or three routes. I immediately detached light parties after them to fall upon their rear; but they were not able to come up with them.

The enemy's loss, as I have observed, I cannot ascertain. One account from the city is, that five hundred wounded had been sent in; another is, that eighty-two wagons had gone in with men in this situation. These, I fear, are both exaggerated, and not to be depended upon. We lost twenty-seven men in Morgan's corps, killed and wounded, besides Major Morris, a brave and gallant officer, who is among the latter. Of the Maryland militia there were also sixteen or seventeen wounded. I have not received further returns yet. I sincerely wish that they had made an attack; as the issue, in all probability, from the disposition of our troops, and the strong situation of our camp, would have been fortunate and happy. At the same time I must add, that reason, prudence, and every principle of policy, forbade us quitting our post to attack them. Nothing but success would have justified the measure; and this could not be expected from their position.

The constant attention and watching I was obliged to give the enemy's movements would not allow me to write before; and this I believe was the less material, as I have reason to think your committee, who were in camp most of the time, and who are now here, transmitted an account of such occurrences as they deemed important in any degree. The first cause,

too, Sir, and my engagements with the committee previous to the coming out of the enemy, will, I trust, sufficiently apologize for my not acknowledging before the honor of your favors of the 13th ultimo and the 1st instant, which came to hand in due order and time. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WHITEMARSH,
11 December, 1777.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving yours of the 1st Inst. some time since, but the situation which the Army has been in must apologise for my not answering it sooner.

General Howe, after making great preparations, and threatening to drive us beyond the mountains,

[1] On November 28th, Robert Morris, Elbridge Gerry, and Joseph Jones were appointed a committee of Congress, to go to headquarters, and "in a private confidential consultation with General Washington, to consider of the best and most practicable means for carrying on a winter's campaign with vigor and success—an object which Congress has much at heart."—*Journals*, 28 November, 1777. A letter written by the committee to Washington, dated at Whitemarsh, 10 December, 1777 (in Morris' MS) is important:—"Among them any reasons offered against a winter's campaign we were sorry to observe one of the most prevalent was a general discontent in the army, and especially among the officers. These discontents are ascribed to various causes, and we doubt not many of them are well founded and deserve particular attention, and in the course of the present winter, will be taken into consideration by Congress, and we hope effectually remedied. That a reform may take place in the army, and proper discipline be introduced, we wish to see the military placed on such a footing as may make a commission a desirable object to the officer, and his rank preserved from degradation and contempt; for these purposes we intend to recommend to Congress: That an half pay establishment be formed and adopted in the American service; That a pensionary establishment take place in favor of officers' widows; That a new regulation of rank, confining it as far as possible to the

came out with his whole force last Thursday evening, and, after manœuvring round us till the Monday following, decamped very hastily, and marched back to Philadelphia.

In my opinion, trying the officers taken by General Dickinson on Staten Island, for high treason, may prove a dangerous expedient. It is true, they left the State after such an offence was declared to be treason; but, as they had not taken the oaths, nor had entered into our service, it will be said they had a right to choose their side. Again, by the same rule that we try them, may not the enemy try any natural born subject of Great Britain, taken in arms in our service? We have a great number of them; and I therefore think, that we had better submit to the necessity of treating a few individuals, who may really deserve a severer fate, as prisoners of war, than run the risk of giving an opening for retaliation upon the Europeans in our service.[1]

line of the army be adopted; That an equitable mode of paying for *back* rations be ordered. Should these several regulations be approved and established by Congress (and we have reason to suppose they will), we trust the prevailing discontents will subside and a spirit of emulation take place among the gentlemen of the army to promote the public service and introduce that order and discipline amongst the troops so essential to the military character. As a further inducement the committee have it also in contemplation to propose in Congress that the officers be permitted to dispose of their commissions under such regulations as may render the measure eligible." The Committee formally reported to Congress the need of completing the army before an active movement could be made.

[1] The officers here mentioned were natives of New Jersey, who entered into the service of the enemy. As this was treason by the law of New Jersey, they were imprisoned, and the Governor considered it his duty to try them in the courts of justice. He conformed to General Washington's advice, however, and put them on the footing of prisoners of war.

The British General Campbell, then on Staten Island, had claimed these of-

I am pleased to hear, that your Assembly are in so good a disposition to regulate the price of necessaries for the army. I could wish that they would not forget to regulate the prices of country produce, which the commissaries tell me has risen to so exorbitant a rate, that there is no purchasing a single article from the farmers. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR THE GULF,
14 December, 1777.

SIR,

On Thursday evening I had the honor to receive your favor of the 8th instant. From several letters, which have lately passed between General Howe and myself, I am fully convinced, that any propositions by me to release the Baron St. Ouary from captivity, either by an exchange or on parole, would be unavailing. He has explicitly stated his sentiments, and has declared himself to be utterly against a partial exchange. The situation of the Baron, through the interest and acquaintance of the Marquis de Lafayette with an officer in the guards, is much more comfortable than that of any of our officers, who are prisoners, he being on parole in the city, whilst they are

ficers from Governor Livingston, and also another person, who had been captured with them. The officers, three in number, were given up, but, in regard to the other person, Governor Livingston wrote: "He is no officer, and had committed a number of robberies in this State before he joined the enemy; and I can hardly think that General Campbell will be of the opinion, that, in consideration of law, a man can expiate the guilt of a prior robbery by a subsequent treason."

all confined in the State-House. I do not know that it is the practice in Europe not to consider volunteers as prisoners. I am inclined to believe that it is not, and that they are generally held as such, unless the contrary is particularly stipulated by cartel. However this may be, they have been held in the present contest on both sides on the footing of other prisoners, and exchanged as such. Besides this, I fear that a proposition calculated for the peculiar benefit of the Baron, would be ill received by our unhappy officers, who have been much longer in confinement, whose sufferings are far greater than his, and who claim a right to exchange in due course.[1]

The inquiries, directed in the resolutions contained in your letter of the 30th ultimo, respecting the loss of the forts in the Highlands and of Fort Mifflin, I shall order to be made, as soon as circumstances will admit. These, however, it is probable, will not be effected in a short time, from the situation of our affairs and inevitable necessity. On Thursday morning we marched from our old encampment, and intended to pass the Schuylkill at Madison's Ford, where a bridge had been laid across the river. When the first division and a part of the second had passed, they found a body of the enemy, consisting, from the

[1] In their resolve, respecting the Baron St. Ouary, Congress designated him as "a gallant gentleman from France, engaged as a volunteer in the service of the United States, and lately by the fortune of war made prisoner by the British." They instructed General Washington to apply for his release, on the ground that volunteers were not to be regarded as prisoners of war; but, if General Howe should not accede to this doctrine, then an enlargement by exchange or on parole was to be solicited for the Baron St. Ouary.—*Journals*, December 3d.

best accounts we have been able to obtain, of four thousand men, under Lord Cornwallis, possessing themselves of the heights on both sides of the road leading from the river and the defile called the Gulf, which I presume are well known to some part of your honorable body. This unexpected event obliged such of our troops, as had crossed, to repass, and prevented our getting over till the succeeding night. This manœuvre on the part of the enemy was not in consequence of any information they had of our movement, but was designed to secure the pass whilst they were foraging in the neighboring country. They were met in their advance by General Potter, with part of the Pennsylvania militia, who behaved with bravery and gave them every possible opposition, till he was obliged to retreat from their superior numbers. Had we been an hour sooner, or had the least information of the measure, I am persuaded we should have given his Lordship a fortunate stroke, or obliged him to return without effecting his purpose, or drawn out all General Howe's force to support him. Our first intelligence was, that it was all out. Lord Cornwallis collected a good deal of forage, and returned to the city the night we passed the river. No discrimination marked his proceedings. All property, whether of friends or foes, that came in their way, was seized and carried off.[1]

[1] John Laurens in a letter to his father gives an account of this day's movements: "When we marched from Whitemarsh Camp and were in the act of crossing the Schuylkill, we received intelligence that the enemy were advancing on this side of the river; in fact a ravaging party of four thousand under the command of Lord Cornwallis had passed the river and were driving Potter's

Enclosed is a copy of a letter from General Burgoyne, by which you will perceive he requests leave to embark his troops at Rhode Island, or at some place on the Sound; and, in case this cannot be granted, that he may be allowed, with his suite, to go there and return from thence to England. His first proposition, as I have observed upon a former occa-

militia before them. Two regiments of this corps, however, are said to have conducted themselves extremely well, and to have given the enemy no small annoyance as they advanced. General Sullivan was Major General of the day, and consequently conducted the march. His division and part of Wayne's had crossed the river; being uncertain as to the number of the enemy, and dreading their advance in force, when part of the army should be on one side of the river and part on the other, he ordered those troops to recross and our bridge to be rendered impassable. Notice of this was sent to the Commander in chief, and when he arrived, parties of the enemy were seen on the commanding heights on this side of the river. There was a pause for some time and consultation what was to be done; parties of horse in the meantime were detached to gain certain intelligence of the enemy's numbers and designs. . . . Some pronounced hastily that the enemy had received intelligence of our march, although the resolution had been taken in council only the night before, and that they were prepared to oppose our passage. Genl. Washington, who never since I have been in his family, has passed a false judgment on such points, gave it as his opinion that the party in view were foragers; that the meeting was accidental, but, however, the enemy might avail themselves of this unexpected discovery, and might draw as much advantage from it as if the rencounter had been premeditated. The intelligence was received that the enemy were retiring in great haste, but it did not appear satisfactory, and the army was ordered to march to Swedes Ford, three or four miles higher up the river and encamp with the right to the Schuylkill. The next morning the want of provisions—I could weep tears of blood when I say it—the want of provisions rendered it impossible to march. We did not march till the evening of that day. Our ancient bridge, an infamous construction, which in many parts obliged the men to march by Indian file, was restored, and a bridge of waggons made over the Swedes Ford, but fence-rails from necessity being substituted to plank, and furnishing a very unstable footing. This last served to cross a trifling number of troops. As the event turned out, Genl. Sullivan's retrograde movement was unspeakably unlucky. If we had persevered in crossing in the first instance, or if we had even crossed in the evening of the first day, the flower of the British army must have fallen a sacrifice to superior numbers."—23 December, 1777.

sion, is certainly inadmissible, and for reasons obvious to himself. As to the second, which respects the departure of himself and suite, Congress will be pleased to determine upon it and favor me with their sentiments by the first opportunity, that I may know what answer to give him.[1] I learn from Mr. Griffin, who has just come from Boston, that this gentleman either holds, or professes to hold, very different ideas of our power from what he formerly entertained; that, without reserve, he has said it would be next to impossible for Britain to succeed in her views, and that he should with freedom declare his sentiments accordingly on his arrival in England; and that he seemed to think the recognition of our independence by the King and Parliament an eligible measure, under a treaty of commerce upon a large and extensive scale. How far these professions are founded in sincerity, it is not easy to determine; but if they

[1] "As to General Burgoyne's request to me to permit him to depart before his army, I did not think myself authorized to grant it, before I consulted Congress, to whom I transmitted a copy of his letter. I shall give him an answer, as soon as I know their determination. I think it would have been highly improper to have allowed him the liberty of visiting your seaport towns. A man of his sagacity and penetration would make many observations upon situations, etc., that might prove detrimental to us in future. . . . Whenever you have occasion for directions in any matters respecting General Burgoyne and his troops, it will be best for you to write fully to Congress upon the subject, as they alone must determine in all cases which refer to them."—*Washington to General Heath*, 17 December, 1777.

"*In Congress*, December 17th; Resolved, that General Washington be directed to inform General Burgoyne, that Congress will not receive nor consider any proposition for indulgence or altering the terms of the convention of Saratoga, unless immediately directed to their own body." Congress had already voted, that a proposal for shipping the troops from any other place, than that stipulated in the Convention at Saratoga, should be rejected.—December 1st.

are, what a mighty change! While I am on the subject of Mr. Burgoyne and his army, I would submit it to Congress, whether it will not be right and reasonable, that all expenses, incurred on their account for provisions, should be paid and satisfied previously to their embarkation and departure; I mean by an actual deposit of the money. Unless this is done, there will be little reason to suppose, that it will ever be paid. They have failed (that is, the nation) in other instances, as I have been told, after liquidating their accounts and giving the fullest certificates, and we cannot expect they will keep better faith with us than with others. The payment, too, I should apprehend, ought to be in coin, as it will enable us to administer some relief to our unfortunate officers and men who are in captivity.[1]

[1] By the Vth Article of the Convention the British troops on their march to Boston were to be supplied with provisions, "by General Gates' orders, at the same rate of rations as the troops of his own army." But Gates was paying for his supplies in paper money, worth at this time only about one third of its nominal or specie value; and the justice of Washington's suggestion to exact full payment in coin for what the British consumed, may with reason be questioned. Congress was already considering the question raised by Washington in his letter of November 1st, (pp. 164, 165 of this volume), and on the 19th of December ordered "that the accounts of all provisions and other necessaries which already have been, or which hereafter may be supplied by the public to prisoners in the power of these States, shall be discharged by either receiving from the British Commissary of prisoners, or any of his agents, provisions or other necessaries, equal in quality and kind to what have been supplied, or the amount thereof in gold and silver, at the rate of 4*s*. 6*d* for every dollar of the currency of these States: and that all these accounts be liquidated and discharged, previous to the release of any prisoners to whom provisions or other necessaries shall have been supplied." Heath, pressed for money, had asked Burgoyne to settle the accounts for November, and had agreed to accept Continental money; but before a settlement was had, he received this resolution of Congress, which he at once communicated to Burgoyne. The British general naturally thought "it was a little extraordinary that we should refuse our own

December 15th.—Congress seem to have taken for granted a fact, that is really not so. All the forage for the army has been constantly drawn from Bucks and Philadelphia counties, and those parts most contiguous to the city; insomuch that it was nearly exhausted, and entirely so in the country below our camp. From these, too, were obtained all the supplies of flour, that circumstances would admit of. The millers in most instances were unwilling to grind, either from their disaffection or from motives of fear. This made the supplies less than they otherwise might have been, and the quantity, which was drawn from thence was little, besides what the guards, placed at the mills, compelled them to manufacture.[1] As to stock, I do not know that much was had from thence, nor do I know that any considerable supply could have been had.

currency, and further added that it was hard, since it was notorious that a Guinea might be exchanged for twelve or fourteen dollars through the country." —*Heath to the President of Congress*, 5 January, 1778. And two weeks later he told the Continental Commissary "that the demanding hard money was so extraordinary that he imagined Great Britain would not hesitate at paying thirty thousand pounds sterling to publish such a procedure to the world."— *Heath to the President of Congress*, 18 January, 1778. He claimed the Convention was infringed by such a demand, contrary alike to the pledge of the public faith, and to general justice implied in the dealings of the most hostile nations, and appealed to Howe. The result was that Howe acceded to an exchange of prisoners, but Washington found himself hampered later by this resolve of December 19th.—*Washington to Howe*, 10 February, 1778; *Washington to the President of Congress*, 8 March, 1778.

[1] "By virtue of the power and direction to me especially given, I hereby enjoin and require all persons residing within seventy miles of my Head Quarters to thresh one half their grain by the first day of February and the other half by the first day of March next ensuing, on pain in case of failure of having all that shall remain in sheaves, after the periods above mentioned, seized by the Commissaries & Quarter Masters of the army and paid for as straw."—*Proclamation*, 20 December, 1777.

I confess I have felt myself greatly embarrassed with respect to a vigorous exercise of military power. An ill-placed humanity, perhaps, and a reluctance to give distress, may have restrained me too far; but these were not all, I have been well aware of the prevalent jealousy of military power, and that this has been considered as an evil, much to be apprehended, even by the best and most sensible among us. Under this idea, I have been cautious, and wished to avoid as much as possible any act that might increase it. However, Congress may be assured, that no exertions of mine, as far as circumstances will admit, shall be wanting to provide our own troops with supplies on the one hand, and to prevent the enemy from getting them on the other. At the same time they must be apprized, that many obstacles have arisen to render the former more precarious and difficult than they usually were, from a change in the commissary's department, at a very critical and interesting period. I should be happy, if the civil authority in the several States, through the recommendations of Congress, or their own mere will, seeing the necessity of supporting the army, would always adopt the most spirited measures, suited to the end. The people at large are governed much by custom. To acts of legislation or civil authority they have ever been taught to yield a willing obedience, without reasoning about their propriety; on those of military power, whether immediate or derived originally from another source, they have ever looked with a jealous and suspicious eye. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEADQUARTERS, GULF MILL,
15 December, 1777.

SIR,

I have the honor of yours of the 2d instant. I am much obliged for the attention you have paid to my requests through General Putnam, and I shall ever acknowledge the readiness with which you have always afforded any assistance from your State, when demanded immediately by myself.

I was never consulted in the least upon the Rhode Island expedition, and I cannot therefore pretend to say who were, or who were not, to blame; but it undoubtedly cost the public an enormous sum to little or no purpose.

I observe by the copy of your letter to Congress that your State had fallen upon means to supply your troops with clothing. I must earnestly beg that it may be sent on to camp as fast as it is collected. To cover the country more effectually, we shall be obliged to lay, in a manner, in the field the whole winter, and except the men are warmly clad they must suffer much.

Among the troops of your State there are three hundred and sixty-three drafts whose time of service will expire with this month. This deduction, with the former deficiency of the regiments, will reduce them exceedingly low; and, as I have represented this matter to Congress very fully, I hope they have before this time urged to the States, the necessity which there is of filling their regiments this winter.

But lest they should not have done it, I beg leave to urge the matter to your immediate consideration. Recruits for the war ought, by all means, to be obtained if possible, but if that cannot be done, drafts for one year at least should be called out without delay. And I hope that as many as are now upon the point of going home will be immediately reinstated. We must expect to lose a considerable number of men by sickness, and other ways, in the course of the winter; and if we cannot take the field in the spring with a superior, or at least an equal force with the enemy, we shall have labored through the preceding campaign to little purpose.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GEORGE READ, PRESIDENT OF DELAWARE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, GULF MILL,
19 December, 1777.

SIR,

I have received information, which I have great reason to believe is true, that the enemy mean to establish a post at Wilmington, for the purpose of countenancing the disaffected in the Delaware State, drawing supplies from that country and the lower parts of Chester county, and securing a post upon the Delaware River during the winter. As the advantages resulting to the enemy from such a position are most obvious, I have determined, and shall accordingly this day send off General Smallwood with a respectable Continental force, to take post at Wilmington before them. If General Howe thinks

the place of that importance to him, which I conceive it is, he will probably attempt to dispossess us of it; and as the force, which I can at present spare, is not adequate to making it perfectly secure, I expect that you will call out as many militia as you possibly can, to rendezvous without loss of time at Wilmington, and put themselves under the command of General Smallwood. I shall hope that the people will turn out cheerfully, when they consider that they are called upon to remain within and defend their own State.

In a letter, which I had the honor of receiving from you some little time past, you express a wish, that some mode may be fallen upon, to procure the exchange of Governor McKinly. As this gentleman will be considered in the civil line, I have not any prisoner of war proper to be proposed for him. The application would go more properly to Congress, who have a number of State prisoners under their direction, for some of whom, Sir William Howe would, probably, exchange the Governor. * * *[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
22 December, 1777.

SIR,

On Saturday evening I had the honor to receive your favor of the 17th instant, with its enclosures. The next day I wrote to General Burgoyne upon the

[1] "Your favor of the 24th of September, inclosing a discourse against Toryism, came safe to my hands. For the honor of the dedication, I return you my sincere thanks, and wish most devoutly that your labor may be crowned with the success it deserves."—*Washington to Rev. Mr. Whitaker* (*Salem, Mass.*), 20 December, 1777.

subject of his application, and transmitted to him a copy of the resolution of Congress founded thereon. That the matter might not be delayed, I despatched my letter by the express, who brought yours, he having informed me, that you expected he would be sent with it.

It is with infinite pain and concern, that I transmit to Congress the enclosed copies of sundry letters respecting the state of the commissary's department. In these, matters are not exaggerated. I do not know from what cause this alarming deficiency, or rather total failure of supplies, arises; but, unless more vigorous exertions and better regulations take place in that line immediately, this army must dissolve. I have done all in my power, by remonstrating, by writing, by ordering the commissaries on this head, from time to time; but without any good effect, or obtaining more than a present scanty relief. Owing to this, the march of the army has been delayed, upon more than one interesting occasion, in the course of the present campaign; and had a body of the enemy crossed the Schuylkill this morning, as I had reason to expect, from the intelligence I received at four o'clock last night, the divisions which I ordered to be in readiness to march and meet them could not have moved. It is unnecessary for me to add more upon the subject. I refer Congress to the copies, by one of which they will perceive, how very unfavorable also our prospect is of having any considerable supplies of salt provisions for the ensuing year.[1]

[1] Extracts from two letters, received on the 22d of December, will be enough to show the grounds upon which this statement is made. "I received an

I would also take the liberty of reminding Congress of the necessity of filling, as soon as possible, the offices of quartermaster and adjutant general. These posts are of infinite importance, and without appointments to them it will be impossible to conduct the affairs of the army. The first office is now suffering much for want of a head to direct the great business of it; and the latter will be in the same predicament, in the course of a few days, by the departure of Colonel Pickering, who, since his appointment to the Board of War, has been waiting only for a successor.[1]

order," writes General Huntington, "to hold my brigade in readiness to march. Fighting will be by far preferable to starving. My brigade are out of provisions, nor can the commissary obtain any meat. I am exceedingly unhappy in being the bearer of complaints to Head-Quarters. I have used every argument my imagination can invent to make the soldiers easy, but I despair of being able to do it much longer." The next is from General Varnum. "According to the saying of Solomon, hunger will break through a stone-wall. It is therefore a very pleasing circumstance to the division under my command, that there is a probability of their marching. Three days successively we have been destitute of bread. Two days we have been entirely without meat. The men must be supplied, or they cannot be commanded. The complaints are too urgent to pass unnoticed. It is with pain, that I mention this distress. I know it will make your Excellency unhappy; but, if you expect the exertion of virtuous principles, while your troops are deprived of the necessaries of life, your final disappointment will be great in proportion to the patience, which now astonishes every man of human feeling."

[1] In a letter to Congress, dated October 8th, General Mifflin had tendered the resignation of his commissions of major-general and quartermaster-general, on the ground of ill-health. His commission of quartermaster was accepted on the 7th of November, but the rank and commission of major-general, without the pay annexed to the office, was continued to him; and at the same time he was chosen a member of the new Board of War, which was constituted of persons not in Congress. This Board, by its first organization, was to consist of three members. The persons chosen were General Mifflin, Colonel Pickering, and Colonel Harrison. Before it went into operation, the Board was enlarged to five members, and, Harrison having declined the appointment, General Gates, Joseph Trumbull, and Richard Peters were chosen in addition to Mifflin and

Three o'clock, P. M.—Just as I was about to conclude my letter, your favor of the 20th came to hand. It would give me infinite pleasure to afford protection to every individual, and to every spot of ground, in the whole of the United States. Nothing is more my wish; but this is not possible with our present force. In all wars, from the nature of things, individuals and particular places must be exposed. It has ever been and ever will be the case, and we have only to pity and to regret the misfortune of those, who from their situation are subject to ravage and depredation. These facts are obvious to all; and if that system of conduct is pursued by an army, which is most likely to give the most extensive security, it is all that can be done or expected from it.

I assure you, Sir, no circumstance in the course of the present contest, or in my whole life, has employed more of my reflection or consideration, than in what manner to effect this, and to dispose of the army during the winter. Viewing the subject in any point of light, there was a choice of difficulties. If keeping the field was thought of,—the naked condition of the troops and the feelings of humanity opposed the measure; if returning to the towns in the interior parts of the State, which consistently with the preser-

Pickering. On recommendation of Mifflin, Gates was made president of the Board, and recalled from his command in the northern department to fill that station. The salary of each member was two thousand dollars a year. The Board were intrusted with extensive powers, but they were obliged to sit in the place where Congress was held. All their proceedings were to be inspected by Congress or a committee once a month, and free access to the records was to be allowed at all times to any member of Congress.—*Journals*, October 17th; November 7th, 27th.

vation of the troops, from their necessitous circumstances, might have been justifiable,—the measure was found inexpedient, because it would have exposed and left uncovered a large extent of country; if cantoning the troops in several places, divided and distant from each other,—then there was a probability of their being cut off, and but little prospect of their giving security to any part. Under these embarrassments, I determined to take post near this place, as the best calculated in my judgment to secure the army, to protect our stores, and cover the country; and for this purpose we are beginning to hut, and shall endeavor to accomplish it as expeditiously as possible.

I have also, from a desire of preventing the enemy from an intercourse with the Delaware State, and from making incursions there, detached General Smallwood with the Maryland forces to take post at Wilmington, which I had strong reason to believe the enemy intended. This however I cannot but consider as hazardous, and shall be happy if it does not turn out so. I have it also in contemplation to throw a bridge over the Schuylkill near this place, as soon as it is practicable; by means of which I hope we shall be able in a great measure, with the aid of the militia, to check the excursions of the enemy's parties on the other side.

As to Jersey, I am sensible of her sufferings and exertions in the present contest, and there is no State to which I would more willingly extend protection; but, as I have observed, it is not in my power to give

it, in that degree, which seems to be wished and expected. I cannot divide the army (not superior, when collected, from sickness and other causes equally painful, to the enemy's force,) into detachments, contrary to every military principle, and to our own experience of the dangers that would attend it. If this is done, I cannot be answerable for the consequences. My feelings lead strongly to universal relief, but I have not the power to afford it; nevertheless, it has been and is still my intention, as soon as I have formed and secured this camp, to detach a small force to aid and countenance their militia. This is all, it appears to me, that can be done; and I hope the apprehensions in that quarter for the greater part will prove rather imaginary than well grounded, though I confess there are strong reasons to conclude, that the enemy will not be remiss in their acts of violence and injury there or any where else. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 23 December, 1777.

SIR,

Full as I was in my representation of the matters in the commissary's department yesterday, fresh and more powerful reasons oblige me to add, that I am now convinced beyond a doubt, that, unless some great and capital change suddenly takes in that line, this army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things; starve, dissolve, or disperse in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they

can. Rest assured, Sir, this is not an exaggerated picture, and that I have abundant reason to suppose what I say.

Yesterday afternoon, receiving information that the enemy in force had left the city, and were advancing towards Derby with the apparent design to forage, and draw subsistence from that part of the country, I ordered the troops to be in readiness, that I might give every opposition in my power; when behold, to my great mortification, I was not only informed, but convinced, that the men were unable to stir on account of provision, and that a dangerous mutiny, begun the night before, and which with difficulty was suppressed by the spirited exertions of some officers, was still much to be apprehended for want of this article. This brought forth the only commissary in the purchasing line in this camp; and, with him, this melancholy and alarming truth, that he had not a single hoof of any kind to slaughter, and not more than twenty-five barrels of flour! From hence form an opinion of our situation when I add, that he could not tell when to expect any.

All I could do under these circumstances, was to send out a few light parties to watch and harass the enemy, whilst other parties were instantly detached different ways to collect, if possible, as much provision as would satisfy the present pressing wants of the soldiery. But will this answer? No, Sir; three or four days of bad weather would prove our destruction. What then is to become of the army this winter? And if we are so often without provisions now, what is to become of us in the spring, when our force will

be collected, with the aid perhaps of militia to take advantage of an early campaign, before the enemy can be reinforced? These are considerations of great magnitude, meriting the closest attention; and they will, when my own reputation is so intimately connected with the event and to be affected by it, justify my saying, that the present commissaries are by no means equal to the execution of the office, or that the disaffection of the people is past all belief. The misfortune, however, does in my opinion proceed from both causes; and, though I have been tender heretofore of giving any opinion, or lodging complaints, as the change in that department took place contrary to my judgment, and the consequences thereof were predicted; yet, finding that the inactivity of the army, whether for want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials, is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar but by those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth, then, I can declare, that no man in my opinion ever had his measures more impeded than I have, by every department of the army.

Since the month of July we have had no assistance from the quartermaster-general, and to want of assistance from this department the commissary-general charges great part of his deficiency. To this I am to add, that, notwithstanding it is a standing order, and often repeated, that the troops shall always have two days' provisions by them, that they might be ready at any sudden call; yet an opportunity has scarcely ever offered, of taking an advantage of the enemy, that

has not been either totally obstructed, or greatly impeded, on this account. And this, the great and crying evil, is not all. The soap, vinegar, and other articles allowed by Congress, we see none of, nor have we seen them, I believe, since the battle of Brandywine. The first, indeed, we have now little occasion for; few men having more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all. In addition to which, as a proof of the little benefit received from a clothier-general, and as a further proof of the inability of an army, under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of soldiers, (besides a number of men confined to hospitals for want of shoes, and others in farmers' houses on the same account,) we have, by a field-return this day made, no less than two thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight men now in camp unfit for duty, because they are barefoot and otherwise naked. By the same return it appears, that our whole strength in Continental troops, including the eastern brigades, which have joined us since the surrender of General Burgoyne, exclusive of the Maryland troops sent to Wilmington, amounts to no more than eight thousand two hundred in camp fit for duty; notwithstanding which, and that since the 4th instant, our numbers fit for duty, from the hardships and exposures they have undergone, particularly on account of blankets (numbers having been obliged, and still are, to sit up all ight by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a atural and common way), have decreased near two ousand men.

We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter-quarters or not (for I am sure no resolution of mine would warrant the Remonstrance), reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks or stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow; and moreover, as if they conceived it easily practicable for an inferior army, under the disadvantages I have described ours to be, which are by no means exaggerated, to confine a superior one, in all respects well-appointed and provided for a winter's campaign, within the city of Philadelphia, and to cover from depredation and waste the States of Pennsylvania and Jersey. But what makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye is, that these very gentlemen,—who were well apprized of the nakedness of the troops from ocular demonstration, who thought their own soldiers worse clad than others, and who advised me near a month ago to postpone the execution of a plan I was about to adopt, in consequence of a resolve of Congress for seizing clothes, under strong assurances that an ample supply would be collected in ten days agreeably to a decree of the State (not one article of which, by the by, is yet come to hand),—should think a winter's campaign, and the covering of these States from the invasion of an enemy, so easy and practicable a business. I can assure those gentlemen, that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside, than to occupy a cold, bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow,

without clothes or blankets. However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel superabundantly for them, and, from my soul, I pity those miseries, which it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent.[1]

It is for these reasons, therefore, that I have dwelt upon the subject; and it adds not a little to my other difficulties and distress to find, that much more is expected of me than is possible to be performed, and that upon the ground of safety and policy I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army from public view, and thereby expose myself to detraction and calumny. The honorable committee of Congress went from camp fully possessed of my sentiments respecting the establishment of this army, the necessity of auditors of accounts, the appointment of officers, and new arrangements. I have no need, therefore, to be prolix upon these subjects, but I refer to the committee. I shall add a word or two to show, first, the necessity of some better provision for binding the officers by the tie of interest to the service, as no day nor scarce an hour passes without the offer of a resigned commission[2]; (otherwise I

[1] Alluding to the Memorial, or Remonstrance, of the legislature of Pennsylvania, respecting his going into winter-quarters.

[2] In the expectation of checking the spirit of resigning among the officers the House of Commons of North Carolina passed a resolution that any Carolina officer "who shall, unless for good and sufficient reasons, certified to the governor to be such by the Commander in chief of the Continental army, resign his commission at this critical period, shall be held and deemed incapable of holding hereafter any office, civil or military, in the gift of this State." This called out the following from the General:

"I had the Honor to receive your Favor of the 25th Ulto. with Its Inclosure by yesterday's post. A spirit of resigning their Commissions, whether resulting from necessary causes or feigned ones, I cannot determine, has been but too

much doubt the practicability of holding the army together much longer, and in this I shall probably be thought the more sincere, when I freely declare, that I do not myself expect to derive the smallest benefit from any establishment that Congress may adopt, otherwise than as a member of the community at large in the good, which I am persuaded will result from the measure, by making better officers and better troops;) and, secondly, to point out the necessity of making the appointments and arrangements without loss of time. We have not more than three months, in which to prepare a great deal of business. If we let these slip or waste, we shall be laboring under the same difficulties all next campaign, as we have been this, to rectify mistakes and bring things to order.

Military arrangement, and movements in consequence, like the mechanism of a clock, will be imperfect and disordered by the want of a part. In a very sensible degree have I experienced this, in the course of the last summer, several brigades having no brigadiers appointed to them till late, and some not at all; by which means it follows, that an additional weight

prevalent in the army of late. I have discountenanced it as much as possible, especially where the Applications were by Men of merit and in some such instances, have peremptorily refused to grant 'em. The practice is of pernicious tendency, and must have an unhappy influence on the service. At the same time it is to be observed, where officers wish to resign, whose characters are exceptionable or do not stand in a favorable point of view, their commissions should be received, as their continuance would not promote the Public Interest and might prevent the promotion of better men. I shall pay due regard to the Resolve of your Honble. House of Commons, and that their views may be the more fully answered, I shall deliver a copy of it to the Commanding officer of your troops, that it may be communicated through their line."—*Washington to Governor Caswell*, 25 December, 1777.

is thrown upon the shoulders of the Commander-in-chief, to withdraw his attention from the great line of his duty. The gentlemen of the committee, when they were at camp, talked of an expedient for adjusting these matters, which I highly approved and wish to see adopted; namely, that two or three members of the Board of War, or a committee of Congress, should repair immediately to camp, where the best aid can be had, and with the commanding officer, or a committee of his appointment, prepare and digest the most perfect plan, that can be devised, for correcting all abuses and making new arrangements; considering what is to be done with the weak and debilitated regiments, if the States to which they belong will not draft men to fill them, for as to enlisting soldiers it seems to me to be totally out of the question; together with many other things, that would occur in the course of such a conference; and, after digesting matters in the best manner they can, to submit the whole to the ultimate determination of Congress.

If this measure is approved, I would earnestly advise the immediate execution of it, and that the commissary-general of purchases, whom I rarely see, may be directed to form magazines without a moment's delay in the neighbourhood of this camp, in order to secure provision for us in case of bad weather. The quartermaster-general ought also to be busy in his department. In short, there is as much to be done in preparing for a campaign, as in the active part of it. Every thing depends upon the

preparation that is made in the several departments, and the success or misfortunes of the next campaign will more than probably originate with our activity or supineness during this winter. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE EXECUTIVES OF THE EASTERN STATES.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
29 December, 1777.

SIR,

I take the liberty of transmitting to you the enclosed return, which contains a state[ment] of such of the Connecticut[1] regiments as are in the army immediately under my command. By this you will discover how deficient, how exceedingly short, they are of the complement of men, which of right, according to the establishment, they ought to have. This information I have thought it my duty to lay before you, that it may have that attention which its importance demands; and in full hope that the most early and vigorous measures will be adopted, not only to make the regiments more respectable, but complete. The expediency and necessity of this procedure are too obvious to need arguments. Should we have a respectable force to commence an early campaign with, before the enemy are reinforced, I trust we shall have an opportunity of striking a favorable and an happy stroke. But if we should be obliged to defer it, it will not be easy to describe, with any degree of precision, what disagreeable consequences

[1] The name of the State varied with the letter.

may result from it. We may rest assured that Britain will strain every nerve to send from home and abroad, as early as possible, all the troops it shall be in her power to raise or procure. Her views and schemes for subjugating these States and bringing them under her despotic rule will be unceasing and unremitted. Nor should we, in my opinion, turn our expectations to, or have the least dependence on, the intervention of a foreign war. Our wishes on this have been disappointed hitherto, and perhaps it may long be the case. However, be this as it may, our reliance should be wholly on our own strength and exertions. If, in addition to these, there should be aid derived from a war between the enemy and any of the European powers, our situation will be so much the better; if not, our efforts and exertions will have been the more necessary and indispensable. For my own part, I should be happy if the idea of a foreign rupture should be thrown entirely out of the scale of politics, and that it may have not the least weight in our public measures. No bad effects could flow from it, but, on the contrary, many of a salutary nature. At the same time, I do not mean that such an idea ought to be dicsouraged among the people at large.

Your ready exertions to relieve the distress of your troops for clothing have given me the highest satisfaction. At the same time, knowing how exceedingly the service has been injured, how that every measure will be pursued that circumstances will admit to keep them supplied from time to time, no pains, no efforts can be too great for this purpose. The articles of

shoes, stockings, and blankets demand the most particular attention, as the expenditure of them, from the operations and common accidents of war, we find to be greater than of any other articles. I assure you, sir, it is not easy to give you a just and accurate idea of the sufferings of the troops at large. Were they to be minutely detailed, the relation,—so unexpected, so contrary to the common opinion of people distant from the army—would scarcely be thought credible. I fear I shall wound your feelings by telling you, that by a field-return on the 23d instant, we had in camp not less than 2,898 men unfit for duty by reason of their being barefoot and otherwise naked. Besides these, there are many others detained at the hospitals and in farmers' houses for the same causes. I will no longer dwell upon the melancholy subject, being firmly convinced that your views and most studious care will be employed to render the situation of the troops, both officers and privates, comfortable in future. If the several States direct their attention to this indispensably essential object, as I trust they will, I have the most sanguine hopes that their supplies, with those immediately imported by Congress themselves, will be equal to every demand.

The return transmitted comprehends only such troops of your State as are at this camp. I imagine all the regiments stand nearly upon the same footing in point of deficiency; and from it you will be able to form a pretty just estimate of the men that will be necessary to fill the whole.

Before I conclude I would also add that it will be essential to inoculate the recruits or levies as fast as they are raised that their earliest services may be had. Should this be postponed the work will be to do, most probably, at an interesting and critical period, and when their aid may be materially wanted.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir.

P. S.—We have taken post here for the winter, as a place best calculated to restrain the ravages of the enemy, and busily employed in erecting huts.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL CONWAY.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, 30 December, 1777.

SIR,

I am favored with your letter of yesterday, in which you propose, (in order to lose no time,) to begin with the instruction of the troops. You will

[1] Conway had just been appointed by Congress inspector-general to the army, and promoted to the rank of major-general. He wrote to General Washington, respecting the mode of discharging his new duties, and added in regard to his late appointments: "I accepted the office of inspector-general with the view of being instrumental to the welfare of the cause, and to the glory of the Commander-in-chief, in making his troops fit to execute his orders. The rank of major-general, which was given me, is absolutely requisite for this office, in order to be vested with proper authority to superintend the instruction and the internal administration. There is no inspector in the European armies under a major-general. However, Sir, if my appointment is productive of any inconvenience, or anywise disagreeable to your Excellency, as I neither applied nor solicited for this place, I am very ready to return to France, where I have pressing business; and this I will do with the more satisfaction, as I expect even there to be useful to the cause."—*MS. Letter*, December 29th. It is remarkable that he should assert, as he does here, that he never applied for the appointment of major-general, when there are letters of an anterior date from him to Congress, in which he not only applies, but insists, with a forwardness almost amounting to impudence, that the rank ought to be bestowed on him, and uses a series of arguments to sustain his application.—*Sparks*.

observe, by the resolution of Congress relative to your appointment, that the Board of War is to furnish a set of instructions, according to which the troops are to be manœuvred. As you have made no mention of having received them, I suppose they are not come to you; when they do, I shall issue any orders which may be judged necessary to have them carried into immediate execution.

Your appointment of inspector-general to the army, I believe, has not given the least uneasiness to any officer in it. By consulting your own feelings upon the appointment of the Baron de Kalb, you may judge what must be the sensation of those brigadiers, who by your promotion are superseded.[1] I am told they are determined to remonstrate against it. For my own part I have nothing to do in the appointment of general officers, and shall always afford every countenance and due respect to those appointed by Congress, taking it for granted, that, prior to any resolve of that nature, they take a dispassionate view of the merits of the officer to be promoted, and consider every consequence that can result from such a procedure; nor have I any other wish on that head, but that good, attentive officers may be chosen, and no extraordinary promotion take place, but where the merit of the officer is so generally acknowledged,

[1] When the Baron de Kalb received an appointment in the army, Conway sent a remonstrance to Congress, which begins as follows: "It is with infinite concern, that I find myself slighted and forgot, when you have offered rank to persons, who cost you a great deal of money, and have never rendered you the least service. Baron de Kalb, to whom you have offered the rank of major-general, is my inferior in France." And then he proceeds to utter his complaints and objections, and to demand for himself the rank of major-general.

as to obviate every reasonable cause for dissatisfaction thereat.[1] I am, Sir, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

VALLEY FORGE, 31 December, 1777.

SIR,

It being of great importance to prevent the enemy from supplies of forage and provisions, I must take the liberty of requesting the interposition of your interest and authority for this purpose, and that the most speedy and suitable measures may be adopted and pursued, either by your direction, or that of the legislature or council, for the removal of all that lies within the vicinity of the Jersey shore, opposite to

[1] Conway's reply to this last clause of the letter is sufficiently indicative of his duplicity and vanity. "What you are pleased to call an extraordinary promotion," he says, "is a very plain one. There is nothing extraordinary in it, only that such a place was not thought of sooner. The general and universal merit, which you wish every promoted officer might be endowed with, is a rare gift. We see but few of merit so generally acknowledged. We know but the great Frederic in Europe, and the great Washington on this continent. I certainly never was so rash as to pretend to such a prodigious height. Neither do I pretend to any superiority in personal qualities over my brother brigadiers, for whom I have much regard. But you, Sir, and the great Frederic, know perfectly well, that this trade is not learnt in a few months. I have served steadily thirty years; that is, before some of my comrade brigadiers were born. Therefore I do not think that it will be found marvellous and incredible, if I command here a number of men, which falls much short of what I have commanded there many years in an old army.

"However, Sir, by the complexion of your letter, and by the two receptions you have honored me with since my arrival, I perceive that I have not the happiness of being agreeable to your Excellency, and that I can expect no support in fulfilling the laborious duty of an inspector-general I do not mean to give you or any officer in the army the least uneasiness. Therefore I am very ready to return to France, and to the army where I hope I shall meet with no frowns. I beg leave to wish your Excellency a happy new year and a glorious campaign." —*MS. Letter*, December 31st.

Philadelphia, or that may be within the reach of the enemy's foraging parties, excepting such as may be really essential for the inhabitants' use. They should be removed so far back from the water, that they will not be in danger of falling into the enemy's hands. The Expediency and necessity of the procedure, I am satisfied, will appear at once to you, and I have no doubt as far as it may be in your power, it will be carried into execution. It is not unlikely but that some of the owners, especially if there are any tainted with toryism, will be somewhat averse to the measure, as it has happened in similar cases. However, I trust means will be found to do away their prejudices, and to convince them of the propriety of it. Indeed if they will reason from their own experience and that of their neighbors on this side Delaware, they cannot but assent to it. But be this as it may, it is a matter so important, that it ought not to be dispensed with. The present opportunity, while the weather is severe and a considerable quantity of ice in the River, is favorable for the removal, as the enemy will not be able to give any interruption.

I am not without power and directions from Congress to act myself in such instances. But I would wish the business to be done by civil authority, as their acts will create less jealousy and disgust, and be viewed in a much more unexceptionable light.

In a few days all our light-horse, except a few that will remain to do duty, will be sent to Trenton, to winter and recruit, it being a place under all circumstances the best adapted to that end. Besides

recruiting, they will serve to protect the country from incursions by small parties of the enemy, and will give security to our stores and magazines. In addition to these, when we have secured and fortified our camp, if circumstances will possibly admit, I will send a few more troops. I cannot promise that they will be many, the army being now much reduced, by the expiration of the service of several regiments, and from other causes equally distressing. * * *

I sincerely feel for the unhappy condition of our poor fellows in the hospitals, and wish my powers to relieve them were equal to my inclination. It is but too melancholy a truth, that our hospital stores are exceedingly scanty and deficient in every instance, and I fear there is no prospect of their shortly being better. Our difficulties and distresses are certainly great, and such as wound the feelings of humanity. Our sick naked, and well naked, our unfortunate men in captivity naked! You were certainly right in representing the state of the sick, that they may be made more happy if possible. I have ordered a field-officer to be always in future at the hospitals, and hope that he will contribute all in his power to accommodate them, and prevent some of the inconveniences, which you mention, and which are of great moment. As to the directors, if they do not afford every aid in their power, their conduct is highly culpable, and deserves the severest reprehension. I assure you, Sir, I shall ever consider myself much obliged by your information of any grievances or abuses respecting the army, and shall never suppose

that you step out of your proper line in giving it. We are all equally engaged in the present important struggle, and in the cause of humanity, and are equally concerned in promoting them. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE, 1 January, 1778.

SIR:

I have been duly honored with your several favors of the 23d, 24th, and 25th ult., with the inclosures to which they allude.

In my letters of the 22d and 23d of last month, I mentioned the difficulties which the service labored under for want of a Quarter Master General; and as I am induced to believe that a new nomination has not been made since Gen. Mifflin's resignation, because Congress could not fix upon any person in their opinions fully qualified to fill that important office, I thought it my duty to endeavor to find out a gentleman, who I could venture to recommend, either from my own particular knowledge, or from that of others. That my inquiries might be more extensive, I occasionally mentioned the matter to the General and Field officers, and desired them, if any person came within their idea as proper, that they might mention them to me, that I might, upon their comparative merits, fix upon the most deserving.

Several of the officers from the Northward spoke of the activity and uncommon exertions of Col. Hay, Deputy Quarter Master General in that Department.

Hearing him so well spoken of I enquired very particularly of most of those who had served there in the last campaign, and of Generals Sullivan and Wayne, who had served in that country the two preceding ones, in times of uncommon difficulty. They confirmed the favorable report of the others, and went so far as to say, that without disparagement to any gentlemen, they thought him the best qualified of any man upon the continent for the office in question.

Upon this universal concurrence of all parties, I think I may venture to recommend Col. Hay to the consideration of Congress, and if, upon further inquiry, they should find him answer the high character which he bears, I hope no time will be lost in appointing him, provided some other has not already been the object of their choice. I will first add, that Col. Hay's pretensions, in right of seniority, entitle him to notice.

You must be fully sensible that very little time is left between this and the opening of the next campaign, for the provision of field equipage, carriages, horses and many other articles essentially necessary, towards which I cannot find that any steps have been taken.

In my last I also took occasion to mention, that by Col. Pickering's appointment to the Board of War, I expected he would soon be called upon to take his seat. In a letter from the Secretary of 24th ult. I am desired to permit him to retire and to nominate an Adjutant General pro tempore. But as there is no person upon the spot that I can with propriety ask to accept of the place pro tem., I am obliged to detain him, and am under the necessity for that reason of

urging a new appointment as speedily as possible. I have taken the same methods of endeavoring to find out a person qualified for an Adjutant General, that I did for that of Quarter Master General; but I cannot say that I have received any account sufficiently satisfactory to determine me in favor of any particular person. I will just recite the names that have been mentioned to me, which are Cols. Lee and Scammel, of Massachusetts and New Hampshire; Cols. James and Davies, of Virginia, and Maj. Scott of Pennsylvania. The four first are known to many gentlemen of Congress, and Major Scott is warmly recommended by General St. Clair.

The enemy returned into Philadelphia on Sunday last, having made a considerable hay forage, which appeared to be their only intention. As they kept themselves in close order, and in just such a position that no attack could be made upon them to advantage, I could do no more than extend light parties along their front, and keep them from plundering the inhabitants and carrying off cattle and horses; which had the desired effect.

I have the pleasure to inform you that a vessel has fallen into Gen. Smallwood's hands near Wilmington. I hope she will prove a valuable prize. You have the particulars in the inclosed extract of his letter.[1]

[1] "I am obliged to you for your promise of the prize wine. I do not imagine you will find more liquor on board than will be sufficient for your little garrison, but if the quantity should be any thing considerable, you must not be forgetful of the poor fellows who are exposed to the severity of the weather in very indifferent houses, indeed many of them are not yet under cover."—*Washington to General Smallwood*, 3 January, 1778. The name of the vessel was *Symmetry*.

Before this reaches you, you will have received a letter from Gen. Weedon, in which he has stated his objections to Gen. Woodford's taking rank of him. Gen. Muhlenberg is gone to Virginia, and I therefore cannot say what would have been his objections; but I imagine they are founded upon the same reasons as those of Gen. Weedon. And you may perceive by the inclosed copy of General Wayne's letter to me, that he does not think that the rank of colonel, which Gen. Woodford held at the time of his resignation, could operate in his favor upon his appointment to the rank of Brigadier General. I could therefore wish that Congress, as they now have the matter fully before them, would proceed to the final settlement of the relative rank of the Brigadiers.

I have received information that the militia of Jersey have taken possession of another of the enemy's vessels that ran on ground upon their shore. I have reason to believe the fact is so, but I have it not from full authority.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 2 January, 1778.

SIR,

I take the liberty of transmitting to you the enclosed copies of a letter from me to General Conway, since his return from New York to camp, and of two letters from him to me, which you will be pleased to lay before Congress. I shall not in this letter animadvert upon them; but after making a single observation, submit the whole to Congress.

If General Conway means, by cool receptions, mentioned in the last paragraph of his letter of the 31st ultimo, that I did not receive him in the language of a warm and cordial friend, I readily confess the charge. I did not, nor shall I ever, till I am capable of the arts of dissimulation. These I despise, and my feelings will not permit me to make professions of friendship to the man I deem my enemy, and whose system of conduct forbids it. At the same time, truth authorizes me to say, that he was received and treated with proper respect to his official character, and that he has had no cause to justify the assertion, that he could not expect any support for fulfilling the duties of his appointment. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. The enclosed extract from the proceedings of a council of general officers will show, the office of inspector-general was a matter not of such modern date, as General Conway mentions it to be, and that it was one of the regulations in view for the reform of the army.[1] The foreign officers, who had commissions and no commands, and who were of ability, were intended to be recommended to execute it; particularly the Baron d'Arendt, with whom the idea originated, and whose capacity seemed to be well admitted.[2]

[1] P. 144 of this volume.

[2] Read in Congress, January 7th. Referred to the Board of War.

In the draft of a letter to the Board of War, dated 2 January, 1778, is found the following paragraph, omitted in the letter sent:

"The service and interest of my country I have much at heart, and no man has labored with more unwearied assiduity to promote these than I have in the present contest. This I shall continue to do as far as it may be in my power; but I fear the Board's expectations will never be answered in the instance in which they have so particularly recommended my co-operation and countenance—I

TO MAJOR GENERAL GATES.

VALLEY FORGE, 4 January, 1778.

SIR,

Your Letter of the 8th Ulto. came to my hands a few days ago; and to my great surprize informed me, that a copy of it had been sent to Congress—for what reason, I find myself unable to acct.; but, as some end doubtless was intended to be answered by it, I am laid under the disagreeable necessity of returning my answer through the same channel, lest any member of that honble. body, should harbor an unfavorable suspicion of my having practiced some indirect means to come at the contents of the confidential Letters between you and General Conway.[1]

I am to inform you then, that Colo. Wilkinson, in his way to Congress in the month of Octobr. last fell in with Lord Stirling at Reading; and, not in confidence, that I ever understood, informed his Aid de Camp Majr. McWilliams that General Conway had

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mean in the case of General Conway. His appointment to the office of Inspector General, I believe, would have caused no uneasiness; but his promotion to the rank of Major General has given much. My exertions to co-operate with him, or any other officer to establish discipline shall always be employed; but my feelings and opinion of him will never permit me, without the grossest dissimulation which I abhor and despise, to countenance the man as my Friend, whom I know to be my enemy, and who has been using every base and insidious art to injure me."

[1] "Unwilling as I am to add anything to the multiplicity of matter that necessarily engages the attention of Congress, I am compelled by unavoidable necessity to pass my answer to Genl Gates through their hands.—

"What could induce Genl Gates, to communicate a copy of his Letter to me, to that Honble. Body, is beyond the depth of my comprehension upon any fair ground; but the fact being so, must stand as an apology for a liberty, which no other consideration would have induced me to take, to give you this trouble. I am, Sir."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 4 January, 1778.

written thus to you: "Heaven had been determined to save your Country; or a weak General and bad Counsellors (*) would have ruined it." Lord Stirling from motives of friendship, transmitted the acct. with this remark: "The inclosed was communicated by Colonl. Wilkinson to Majr. McWilliams. Such wicked duplicity of conduct I shall always think it my duty to detect."

In consequence of this information, and without having any thing more in view than merely to shew that Gentl. that I was not unapprized of his intriguing disposition, I wrote him a Letter in these words:

Sir—A Letter which I received last night contained the following paragraph.—In a Letter from Genl. Conway to Genl. Gates he says—heaven has been determined to save your country; or a weak General and bad counsellors would have ruined it. I am, Sir, &c.

Neither this Letter, nor the information which occasioned it was ever, directly, or indirectly communicated by me to a single officer in this army (out of my own family,) excepting the Marquis de la Fayette, who, having been spoken to on the Subject by Genl. Conway, applied for, and saw, under injunctions of secresy, the Letter which contained Wilkinson's information—so desirous was I of concealing every matter that could, in its consequences, give the smallest interruption to the tranquility of this army, or afford a gleam of hope to the enemy by dissentions therein.

Thus Sir, with an openness and candor which I hope will ever characterize and mark my conduct,

* One of whom, by the bye, he was.—*Note by Washington.*

have I complied with your request. The only concern I feel upon the occasion—finding how matters stand—is, that in doing this I have necessarily been obliged to name a Genln. whom I am persuaded (although I never exchanged a word with him upon the subject) thought he was rather doing an act of justice than committing an act of infidelity;—and sure I am, that, till Lord Stirling's Letter came to my hands I never knew that General Conway (who I viewed in the light of a stranger to you) was a correspondant of yours; much less did I suspect that I was the subject of your confidential Letters—

Pardon me then for adding, that so far from conceiving that the safety of the States can be affected, or in the smallest degree injured, by a discovery of this kind; or, that I should be called upon in such solemn terms to point out the author, that I considered the information as coming from yourself, and given with a friendly view to forewarn, and consequently forearm me, against a secret enemy, or in other words, a dangerous incendiary; in which character, sooner or later, this country will know Genl. Conway—But, in this, as in other matters of late, I have found myself mistaken.—I am &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 5 January, 1778.

SIR,

I yesterday evening had the honor of your favor of the 1st instant, with its several enclosures. The let-

ter you allude to, from the Committee of Congress and Board of War, came to hand on Saturday morning; but it does not mention the regulations adopted for removing the difficulties and failures in the commissary line. I trust they will be vigorous, or the army cannot exist. It will never answer to procure supplies of clothing or provision by coercive measures. The small seizures made of the former a few days ago, in consequence of the most pressing and absolute necessity, when that, or to dissolve, was the alternative, excited the greatest alarm and uneasiness even among our best and warmest friends. Such procedures may give a momentary relief; but, if repeated, will prove of the most pernicious consequence. Besides spreading disaffection, jealousy, and fear in the people, they never fail, even in the most veteran troops under the most rigid and exact discipline, to raise in the soldiery a disposition to licentiousness, to plunder and robbery, difficult to suppress afterwards, and which has proved not only ruinous to the inhabitants, but, in many instances, to armies themselves. I regret the occasion that compelled us to the measure the other day; and shall consider it among the greatest of our misfortunes, if we should be under the necessity of practising it again.

I had received from the Board of War a copy of the resolutions of the 29th ultimo, and published such parts in orders as were directed. I shall endeavor, as far as possible, to carry the intention of Congress into execution, respecting the extra pay, and to prevent any from receiving it, who do not come under

their description.[1] The three packets with commissions came safe to hand. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. I am now under the necessity of keeping several parties from the army threshing grain that our supplies may not fail—But this will not do. As to meat, our stock is trifling, not being sufficient for more than two days, if so long, with the most sparing economy.[2]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 9 January, 1778.

SIR,

I yesterday evening had the honor to receive your favor of the 5th Inst. with its enclosures.

The power Congress have been pleased to vest me with, for appointing aids-de-camp, I shall use with economy, and I will not appoint more at any time than shall be necessary and essential to advance the public interest. Any future appointments, that may be material, will be made out of the line of the army, if circumstances will allow it. In general this has been the case.[3] The proceedings of Congress for the

[1] As soon as it was determined, that the army would go into winter-quarters at Valley Forge, Congress directed General Washington to inform the officers and soldiers, that, in consequence of "their soldierly patience, fidelity, and zeal in the cause of their country," one month's pay extraordinary would be given to each.—*Journals*, December 30th.

[2] Read in Congress, January 13th. Referred to the Board of War.

[3] Hitherto the Commander-in-chief had been allowed three aids-de-camp. He was now authorized to appoint as many as he should think proper. In cases where much service was required, it had been his custom to appoint extra aids, but no more than three could be entitled to pay and rank.

In compliance with the strong representations of the Commander-in-chief, the Congress were at this time deliberating on the means of correcting abuses in the army, particularly in the departments for supplying provision and clothing. From

detention of General Burgoyne and army, or rather suspending their embarkation, till the convention of Saratoga is explicitly ratified and notified by the court of Britain, shall remain secret here till they are duly announced by Congress. This procedure, when known to the General, will chagrin him much; for I learn by a letter from General Heath, that the refusal to let his troops embark at Rhode Island, or in the Sound, had given him some uneasiness. I have nothing of importance to communicate; and have only to add, that I have the honor to be, with great respect, &c.[1]

the imperfect organization of these departments, or from bad management in administerng them, great sufferings had been experienced by the soldiers during the preceding campaign. On the 10th of January, it was decided by Congress, that a committee should be sent to the camp, empowered to consult with General Washington, and, in conjunction with him, to mature a new system of arrangements for the administration of the army. The committee were invested with ample powers for effecting all the desirable objects of reform; or rather for digesting and reporting a plan of the same to Congress. The persons chosen were Dana, Reed, and Folsom in Congress; and Gates, Mifflin, and Pickering from the Board of War. When it was found, that these latter gentlemen were fully occupied by their official duties, they were excused, and two members of Congress, Charles Carroll and Gouverneur Morris, in addition to the above three, were chosen in their place. The committee therefore consisted of five members of Congress, who repaired immediately to Valley Forge.

[1] Burgoyne had complained to Gates of the treatment accorded the convention troops in Boston, and charged that "the publick faith is broke." This letter was called for by Congress and that body asserted that Burgoyne's charge was "not warranted by the just construction of any article of the convention," and interpreted it as a "strong indication of his intention, and affords just grounds of fear that he will avail himself of such pretended breach of the Convention in order to disengage himself and the army under him of the obligations they are under to these United States; and that the security which these States have had in his personal honor is hereby destroyed." A resolution was prepared, based upon this belief, suspending the embarkation of Burgoyne and his troops until a "distinct and explicit ratification of the Convention of Saratoga shall be properly notified by the Court of Great Britain." Although brought into Congress on January 3d, this resolution was not formally adopted till the

P. S. The great diversity of opinions prevailing as to the Operations which the Resolves of the 30th Ultimo & 1. Inst. should have, which give a month's extra pay, makes it necessary for me to request Congress to describe with certainty and precision the persons whom they intended should be the particular Objects of their benevolence. Without this I am certain I shall not be able to execute the Resolves according to their intention and in a manner that will be agreable to the Army.

If such officers and men, as were in Camp when the Resolves were passed, and who continue the whole winter are the only objects to be benefitted, It is urged that many who have discharged their duty with fidelity—who have experienced a severe campaign to that time or till a few days before,—who may be now out of Camp, and yet be here in the course of the Winter will be excluded.

For Example, all officers and men on furlough, tho' they should have been long from their Home, before, perhaps much longer in many instances than many who remain, whose private and family necessities oblige them to be absent.—Those who have fallen sick from their services & who are in Hospitals or the Country—Detachments on command these would be excluded. Such discriminations, I believe will give great disgust, and uneasiness. It is difficult in cases

8th (see *Journals of Congress*), and was not communicated to Burgoyne until February 4th. "General Burgoyne and his officers appear much disappointed, and exhibit an appearance rather of concern and uneasiness than sulkiness or resentment, and endeavor to palliate their former expressions and conduct."—*Heath to the President of Congress*, 7 February, 1778. To Congress he offered new pledges of good faith, but could not effect a change in its position.

of this nature to draw a proper line of distinction and impossible to do it in such a way as to give satisfaction. I do not mean to enlarge upon the subject, my only wish is to have it precisely ascertained, who are to be included & paid, and who are not under the Resolves, that I may not on the one hand act contrary to public intention—and on the other give cause of complaint and perhaps do wrong to Individuals.

Knowing the difficulty of drawing a proper line and the disgust and murmurings that ever attend discriminations, were I to advise upon the subject, only such officers and men should be excluded, since Extra pay has been determined on, as are absent from Camp without regular authority or such as may abuse Indulgencies regularly obtained. It has been observed by some and perhaps with propriety, that there are officers & men now in Camp, who may be shortly in, who have no superior claim to merit,—whose affairs are not pressing, or who have already had indulgencies,—or who from their being nearer their friends & connections have had opportunities of seeing them frequently—of ordering their concerns and visiting their Homes, Once, twice, or perhaps oftener in the Campaign, whilst they who are more remote were precluded from any of these advantages & were constantly on duty. These considerations will have their weight in the scale of disgust with the parties interested.

For my part, tho' the Resolves were founded in principles of generosity,—were intended to reward merit, and promote the service, from the difficulties

attending the execution I wish they had never been made, especially as I believe, Officers and Men would in a little time, have become tolerably well reconciled to their Quarters. I have &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, January 13th. Referred to the Board of war.

"Military operations seem to be at an end for the winter. Sir William Howe is fixed in Philadelphia, and we have, by dint of labor and exposing the troops to the utmost severity of the season rather than give up the country to the ravages of the Enemy established a post at this place, where the men are scarcely now covered in log huts, having hitherto lived in tents and such temporary shelters as they could make up. The want of clothing, added to the rigor of the season, has occasioned them to suffer such hardships as will not be credited but by those who have been spectators."—*Washington to Major-General Robert Howe*, 13 January, 1778.

"As the reduction of the battalions is become necessary, a Committee of Congress and three of the Board of War are going to the army for that purpose. It is said many good officers are weary of the service, and wish to resign, unless they are put on a permanent establishment. That they are weary and wish for ease, I do not wonder; but who that are either in the civil or military department are not weary, and do not wish for retirement? The service in every part is severe. Congress sit night and day, taking little rest. Must we all therefore resign? This is no time to talk of ease and retirement; let us first establish our liberties—our desires of ease will then be obtained. I do not mention this as applicable to your Lordship. I never heard of your desire to turn your back upon a service the most noble and glorious. Some, however, do it. We all engaged, I hope, on patriotic principles; may the same, separate from every lucrative and ambitious view, carry us through this contest."—*Abraham Clark to Lord Stirling*, 15 January, 1778. See *Hamilton to Duer*, 1778.

"I am sorry to find you have thoughts of leaving the army. I hope you will consider the matter well and the consequences which such a procedure may involve. Besides the loss of your own services, the example might have a disagreeable influence on other officers. The discontent prevailing in the army from various causes has become but too prevalent, and I fear unless some measures can be adopted to render the situation of the officers more comfortable than what it has been for some time past, that it will increase. The depreciation of our money, the difficulty of procuring necessaries, and the exorbitant prices they are obliged to pay for 'em, when they can be had, are among the causes of dissatisfaction. Whatever your determination may be, I am persuaded you will not remain an idle spectator, or be wanting in your exertions to promote the cause."—*Washington to General Parsons*, 16 January, 1778.

TO GOVERNOR WHARTON.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
18 January, 1778.

SIR,

I have the pleasure of observing by a publication in Dunlap's Paper that before the adjournment of the General Assembly of this State they had among other wholesome laws enacted one for "filling the quota of troops to be raised in this State." As you may perhaps be ignorant of the reduced condition of your Regiments I have thought proper to inclose you a Return by which you will see how very deficient they are at present as to the number required by the allotment. You will also perceive by a note at the Bottom of the Return, how destitute the men in the field are in point of cloathing. I had sent out officers from every Regiment to procure cloathing for their men, and they were collecting considerable quantities, when Colo. Bayard and Mr. Young a committee from Assembly waited upon me, and desired me to call in the officers, informing me that they had appointed Commissioners in every county to purchase necessaries for the army, which would be a mode more agreeable to the inhabitants than if done in a military way. What these Commissioners have done I do not know, but no Cloathing has yet come to the Army thro their Hands. General Wayne informed me that he understood it was collected and stored at Lancaster and he went up about ten days ago to enquire into the matter.

It being recommended to every State to procure what cloathing they can for their own Troops, I trust

yours will not be backward. From the quantity of raw materials and the number of workmen among your people, who being principled against Arms, remain at home and manufacture, I should suppose you have it more in your power to cover your Troops well than any other State. The Continent will continue to import from abroad and to purchase on the general account what they can. I am therefore in hopes that the exertions of the States aided by foreign importations, will contribute to cloath our Troops more comfortably and plentifully than they have heretofore been. But as there are so many impediments in the way of the latter kind of supply, I could wish that no great dependance may be put upon it, but that we may rely principally upon our internal manufacture.[1]

I shall be glad to be favd. with a copy of the law for raising your quota of men, and have the Honor to be with great Respect, Sir, &c.[2]

[1] "If the coats should not be cut out before this reaches you, instead of the usual regimental coat, I would recommend a garment of the pattern of the sailors for jacket. This sets close to the body, and by buttoning double over the breast adds much to the warmth of the soldier. There may be a small cape and cuff of a different color to distinguish the corps. I have consulted most of the officers of the army, and they all seem to think that this kind of coat will be much the best, at least, till we can fall upon means of procuring full supplies of complete uniforms. We cannot spare tailors to go from hence; therefore, if you cannot get all the clothes readily made up, I think you had better send part of the cloth here, with all kinds of necessary trimmings, and the regimental tailors will soon make them up, under the inspection of their officers. As the overall is much preferable to breeches, I would recommend as many of them as possible."—*Washington to Governor Trumbull*, 24 January, 1778.

[2] Washington had ample reason to complain of the inactivity of Pennsylvania at this juncture. When he went into winter quarters it had been arranged with General Armstrong that one thousand of the State militia should be maintained in the country between the Schuylkill and Delaware to check incursions

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
20 January, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Enclosed you will receive a commission, by which you will find, that you are restored to the rank you claim in the line of the army. This I transmit by direction of Congress, and in pursuance of their resolution of the 29th of November.[2] The situation of my papers and the want of blank commissions prevented me doing it before. May I venture to ask whether you are upon your legs again, and, if you are not, may I flatter myself that you will be soon? There is none, who wishes more sincerely for this event, than I do, or who will receive the information with more pleasure. I shall expect a favorable account upon the subject; and as soon as your situation will per-

of the enemy and cut off supplies. Instead of this number, there were on February 12th only between sixty and one hundred men under General Lacey, so that there were "no guards within 20 miles of the city on the East side of the Schuylkill, but a few patrols of light horse, who being unsupported by foot dare not go near the enemy's lines. Owing to this, the intercourse of all the country between Schuylkill and Delaware, is open and uninterrupted with Philadelphia as ever it was, and must continue so, unless a sufficient number of militia are immediately ordered out."—*Washington to Governor Wharton*, 12 February, 1778.

[1] General Arnold and General Lincoln were at this time in Albany, not having yet sufficiently recovered from their wounds to be removed from that place.

[2] "From your peculiar situation, and being one of the officers within the operation of the resolves, I have been induced to communicate the matter to you. I am too sensible, my dear Sir, of your disposition to justice and generosity, of your wishes to see every man in the possession of his rightful claim, not to be convinced, that you will cheerfully acquiesce in a measure calculated for that end. In this instance General Arnold is restored to a violated right, and the restitution I hope will be considered by every gentleman concerned, as I am sure it will by you, as an act of necessary justice."—*Washington to Major-General Lincoln*, 20 January, 1778.

mit, I request that you will repair to this army, it being my earnest wish to have your services the ensuing campaign. In hopes of this, I have set you down in an arrangement now under consideration, and for a command, which I trust will be agreeable to yourself, and of great advantage to the public.

I have nothing of importance to inform you of in the military line, that is new or interesting. The enemy still remain in possession of Philadelphia, and have secured themselves by a strong chain of redoubts, with intrenchments of communication from the Schuylkill to the Delaware. We, on our part, have taken a post on the west side of the former about twenty miles from the city, and with much pains and industry have got the troops tolerably well covered in huts. We have to regret that we are not in more comfortable quarters, but these could not be found, unless we had retired to the towns in the more interior part of the State; the consequence of which would have been distress to the virtuous citizens of Philadelphia, who had fled thither for protection, and the exposure of a considerable tract of fertile country to ravage and ruin. I am, dear Sir, with great esteem and regard, &c.

TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 20 January, 1778.

SIR,

Your letter of the 8th instant, enclosing Lieutenant Eyre's[1] representation, was duly received. I am not at liberty to contradict the facts, which he has related;

[1] Thomas Eyre.

but I am inclined to think, from his own state, that his conduct has not been so discreet, as it should have been; and that, if he experienced a severer treatment, than had been usually imposed upon officers, prisoners with us, it proceeded in some measure at least from that cause. But were not this the case, if the insults and incivilities, which Mr. Eyre complains of having suffered, were ever so unprovoked by him, though I wish not to justify them, yet I cannot forbear observing, that they are not to be wondered at, since the accounts generally received of the treatment of our officers in your hands are replete with instances of the most flagrant indignities, and even cruelties.

Americans have the feelings of sympathy, as well as other men. A series of injuries may exhaust their patience, and it is natural, that the sufferings of their friends in captivity should at length irritate them into resentment, and to acts of retaliation. If you suppose Mr. Eyre's representation to be just, and that he escaped from a rigorous confinement, under no obligation of parole, I cannot conceive upon what principle you still consider him my prisoner. But, if you are of a different opinion, I shall expect some gentleman of ours in your possession, who was taken in a similar character, in return for him. He was reported to me, at the time of his capture, as a volunteer, in which light I still view him. The officer you mention did not attend the flag of truce with my knowledge or consent. His conduct was reprehensible, and I hope an instance of this sort will not happen again.

Mr. James Bayard was taken prisoner near the Swedes' Ford, the day your army crossed the Schuyl-

kill. He had just returned from college, and had no rank in or connexion with the army. He is not to be considered as a prisoner of war, but as a citizen, and as such his friends will propose an exchange for him. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
22 January, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I have your favor of the 6th and 8th instants. I particularly alluded to Henley's, Lee's, and Jackson's Regiments; when I expressed my surprise that they had not been inoculated, as they had been so long in Boston. I hope that a very strict attention will be paid to that matter against the next campaign. We find upon a scrutiny that there are upwards of two thousand men to be inoculated in camp at this time.

I have given the Adjutant General the Resolve of your Council, but he tells me that he does not think it will be in the powers of the Colonels to make such a return as is called for. Few of them have their papers with them, and some of these who were at Ticonderoga lost them. In my next I shall be able to inform you whether it can be done. Some little time past I sent the President of the Council an exact

[1] In the draft of a letter to Governor Trumbull was written a paragraph that was afterwards stricken out. "To submit to the unjust claims of General Howe, would relieve those at present in captivity; but it would in my opinion afford him too much encouragement, if he should ever again get a large number of our men in his possession, first to reduce them to death's door, and then turn them out upon parole in such a condition that few would ever reach home, and none ever recover."

Return of such of their Troops as are under my immediate command for their Government in compleating their levies.

You will, I suppose, before this time have received orders from Congress, respecting the delaying the embarkation of General Burgoyne and his army till the convention is ratified by Great Britain. By this step General Burgoyne will, more than probable, look upon himself as released from all former ties, and consequently at liberty to make use of any means to effect an escape. I would therefore have you increase the vigilance, and, if necessary, the strength of your guards. All magazines of arms should be removed from Boston and the neighborhood; for if any attempt is made, it must be by first seizing upon arms to force their way.

I cannot think with you, that the operations of the next campaign will be against New England, except the enemy are much more strongly reinforced, than I think they have any chance of being. They know the unanimity and spirit of the people too well to attempt it by detachment; and should they send a considerable body from Philadelphia, they must either remain besieged in the town, which would be ignominious, or risk a defeat should they come into the field with inconsiderable numbers. The troops, who went back from Philadelphia to New York, were I believe only intended for the security of that city. The garrison was so small, after the reinforcements had been sent to General Howe, that the inhabitants complained much of their being abandoned, and the

troops were returned to quiet them. This being merely matter of opinion, it should not relax your endeavors to perfect the necessary defences of the harbor, and to fix upon signals which may at all times alarm the country upon any sudden invasion. If any good sealing wax is to be procured in Boston be pleased to direct a dozen pound to be purchased for me and sent on at different times as opportunity offer. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

VALLEY FORGE, 25 January, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I begin to be very apprehensive that the season will entirely pass away, before any thing material will be done for the defence of Hudson's River. You are well acquainted with the great necessity there is for having the works there finished, as soon as possible; and I most earnestly desire, that the strictest attention may be paid to every matter, which may contribute to finishing and putting them in a respectable state before the spring.[1]

[1] The forts and other works in the Highlands were entirely demolished by the British, and it now became a question of some importance, whether they should be restored in their former positions, or new places should be selected for that purpose. About the beginning of January the grounds were examined by General Putnam, Governor Clinton, General James Clinton, and several other gentlemen, among whom was Radière, the French engineer; and they were all, except Radière, united in the opinion, that West Point was the most eligible place to be fortified. Radière opposed this decision with considerable vehemence, and drew up a memorial designed to show, that the site of Fort Clinton possessed advantages much superior to West Point. As the engineer was a man of science, and had the confidence of Congress and the Commander-in-chief, it was deemed expedient by General Putnam to consult the Council

I wish you had not waited for returns of the militia to furnish me with a state of the troops in that quarter; and, if you do not get them in before you receive this, you will please to let me have an accurate return of the Continental troops alone, it being absolutely necessary that I should know the strength of your command as soon as possible. I congratulate you on the success of your two little parties against the enemy, which I dare say will prevent their making so extensive excursions for some time at least. One circumstance however I cannot avoid taking notice of, that our officers, who have been but a very short

and Assembly of New York, before he came to a final determination. A committee was appointed by those bodies, who spent three days reconnoitring the borders of the river in the Highlands, and they were unanimous in favor of West Point, agreeing herein with every other person authorized to act in the affair, except the engineer. It was accordingly decided, on the 13th of January, that the fortifications should be erected at West Point.—*Putnam's MS. Letter*, January 13th.—*Radière's Memorial.*

General Putnam wrote, on the 13th of February, in reply to the above letter from the Commander-in-chief:

"At my request the legislature of this State have appointed a committee, to affix the places and manner of securing the river, and to afford some assistance in expediting the work. The state of affairs now at this post, you will please to observe, is as follows. The chain and necessary anchors are contracted for, to be completed by the first of April; and, from the intelligence I have received, there is reason to believe they will be finished by that time. Parts of the boom intended to have been used at Fort Montgomery, sufficient for this place, are remaining. Some of the iron is exceedingly bad; this I hope to have replaced with good iron soon. The chevaux-de-frise will be completed by the time the river will admit of sinking them. The batteries near the water, and the fort to cover them, are laid out. The latter is within the walls six hundred yards around, twenty-one feet base, fourteen feet high, the *talus* two inches to the foot. This I fear is too large to be completed by the time expected. Governor Clinton and the committee have agreed to this plan, and nothing on my part shall be wanting to complete it in the best and most expeditious manner. Barracks and huts for about three hundred men are completed, and barracks for about the same number are nearly covered. A road to the river has been made with great difficulty."

time in the enemy's hands, reap the advantages of any captures which happen to be made by us. This must not be practised in future, as it is the height of injustice, and will, if continued, draw upon us the censures of the officers, who have been for a long time suffering all the rigors of a severe captivity. The proper mode of proceeding is, to deliver them into the hands of the commissary of prisoners, who must be best acquainted with the propriety of complying with the claims of our officers in their hands. I shall represent your situation, in the money way, to the paymaster-general, and order such measures to be taken as may relieve you. I am, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

VALLEY FORGE, 27 January, 1778.

SIR,

Your two letters of the 24th instant came to hand. Before the receipt of the first I had written to you upon the subject contained in it, in consequence of your letter to the commanding officer at Lancaster, which had been transmitted to me. As that will inform you fully respecting the British officers and clothing, I will not trouble you with a repetition of the matter.[1] I must observe, however, that the num-

[1] "This evening I have received a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Smith at Lancaster, advising me of the confinement of the British officers, who were going with the clothing and medicine for the prisoners in our hands. This measure I consider rather unfortunate, as they came out by my permission, and in consequence of a stipulation between myself and General Howe. The officers are a Hessian and British regimental quartermaster, and a doctor and two mates. They had passports signed by one of my aids, who met

ber of officers and men, who came out, does not appear to me so very extraordinary, considering the various duties they have to perform, and the amount of wagons and necessaries they have in charge. The officers are under parole, and the party unarmed, nor will the state of this army admit large escorts to be detached; and if it were much more respectable, I should apprehend two officers sufficient to attend the flag. I should have been happy, if the officers and clothing had not been seized, as it destroys that confidence, which should ever be had in passports, and involves the consequences of a delicate nature. In answer to the last clause of your letter, respecting the detention of the clothing, I refer you to my letter of yesterday, by which you will perceive, that there is a particular agreement between General Howe and myself, under the sanction of which they came out.

I am much obliged by your polite request of my opinion and advice on the expedition to Canada and

them at our most advanced post, and were attended by a captain and lieutenant of our army.

"Mr. Boudinot, I am persuaded, was mistaken in his representation respecting General Howe's forbidding any more provisions being sent in by water, as the only information he had was derived from a postscript in a letter from him to me, namely, 'A sloop with flour has been received yesterday evening, for the use of the prisoners here; but I am to desire, that no more flags of truce may be sent by water, either up or down the river, without leave being previously obtained.' As to clothing, I have no doubt but General Howe has denied us the liberty of purchasing. This is now a subject of difference between us, and the design of our insisting, that he shall victual his troops in our hands by a certain day, is to oblige him to consent to that measure. But it should not, in my opinion, prevent him from sending clothes to the prisoners, especially as he had obtained my consent for the same, so long ago as the last day of November, in consideration of his assurances to permit a commissary of ours to go into

other occasions. In the present instance, as I neither know the extent of the objects in view, nor the means to be employed to effect them, it is not in my power to pass any judgment upon the subject. I can only sincerely wish, that success may attend it, both as it may advance the public good, and on account of the personal honor of the Marquis de Lafayette, for whom I have a very particular esteem and regard. Your letter was delivered to him in a little time after it came to my hands, and he proposes to set out for Yorktown to-morrow.[1]

Agreeably to your request I shall order Hazen's regiment to march from Wilmington to this place, from whence it will immediately proceed towards Albany. As some particular purpose seems to be intended by desiring this regiment, I am induced to part with it, notwithstanding our force will ill bear the smallest diminution. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.

Philadelphia, with necessaries for our people in his hands. Matters being thus circumstanced, and the conclusion of your letter to Colonel Smith directing the officers to be secured till further orders, either from the Board of War or from me, I have written to him to release and permit them to pursue their route."—*Washington to the Board of War*, 26 January, 1778.

[1] On January 22d Congress had adopted a proposition from the Board of War for an irruption into Canada under general officers appointed by Congress. The following day, the Marquis de Lafayette, Major-General Conway and Brigadier-General Stark were elected to conduct the expedition.

Lafayette accepted the appointment with reluctance, and only on the advice of Washington. He obtained DeKalb as second in command and, thus supported, reached Albany to find no preparations made for the expedition, and all the persons concerned, even Conway himself, convinced of the impossibility of conducting one with any hope of success. The committee in camp at Valley Forge had disapproved of it, the Board of War had held out promises which it could not perform, and Lafayette predicted that this expedition would be "as famous as the secret expedition against Rhode Island."

TO MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES LEE.

VALLEY FORGE, 27 January, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I last night received your favor of the 30th ultimo.[1] It gave me great pleasure to hear that you were released from your confined situation, and permitted so many indulgences. You may rest assured, that I feel myself very much interested in your welfare, and that every exertion has been used on my part to effect your exchange. This I have not been able to accomplish. However, from the letters, which have lately passed between Sir William Howe and myself upon the subject of prisoners, I am authorized to expect, that you will return in a few days to your friends on parole, as Major-General Prescott will be sent in on the same terms for that purpose. Indeed, till I saw Major Williams last night, I supposed that he had arrived either at New York or Rhode Island, having directed his releasement as soon as I was at liberty to do it. I will take the earliest opportunity to

[1] In that letter General Lee wrote: "I have the strongest reason to flatter myself, that you will interest yourself in whatever concerns my comfort and welfare. I think it my duty to inform you, that my condition is much bettered. It is now five days that I am on my parole. I have the full liberty of the city and its limits; have horses at my command furnished by Sir Henry Clinton and General Robertson; am lodged with two of the oldest and warmest friends I have in the world, Colonel Butler and Major Disney of the forty-third regiment; with the former I was bred up from the age of nine years at school; the latter is a *commilito* from the time I entered the service in the forty-fourth. In short, my situation is rendered as easy, comfortable, and pleasant as possible, for a man who is in any sort a prisoner. I have nothing left to wish for, but that some circumstance may arise, which may make it convenient for both parties, that a general exchange may take place, and I among the rest reap the advantage. Give my love to all my friends, particularly to Greene, Mifflin, Reed, and Morgan, and be persuaded that I am most sincerely and devotedly yours."—December 30th.

recommend to your friends, Mr. Nourse and Mr. White, the care of your farm.

Your request to Major Morris, in favor of Mrs. Battier, reached me only last night. I wish I had been informed of it sooner. I have enclosed a passport for her to Major Morris, and I doubt not but he will do every thing in his power to accommodate a lady, from whose husband you have received so many civilities. I am, dear Sir, with great esteem and regard, &c.

TO A COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.[1]

28 January, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

The numerous defects, in our present military establishment, rendering many reformations and many new arrangements absolutely necessary, and Congress having been pleased to appoint you a Committee, in concert with me, to make and recommend such, as shall appear eligible, in pursuance, of the various objects, expressed in their resolution for that purpose,

[1] This important paper was drawn up for the use of the Committee of Congress mentioned on p. 283. It is based upon the suggestions and recommendations of the leading officers of the Continental army, called out by some inquiries by Washington, and is exhaustive on the subject, affording an almost fully drawn picture of the army at this, one of the crucial periods of the war. A part of this statement has already been printed, from imperfect drafts, in the *Works of Alexander Hamilton* (Edition, 1850), ii., 138, and the drafts are among the Hamilton MSS. in the Department of State, at Washington. The original, from which the paper is now printed, is in Hamilton's writing, as aide-de-camp, but, as the drafts show, was prepared by the Commander-in-chief, and for some cause was returned to him by the Committee. For this reason, the paper was not found among the MSS. of the Continental Congress, but among the drafts of Washington's military correspondence, an endorsement proving that it had passed through the Committee's hands.

I have in the following sheets briefly delivered my sentiments upon such of them as seemed to me most essential;—so far, as observation has suggested, and leisure permitted. These are submitted to consideration and I shall be happy, if they are found conducive to remedying the evils and inconveniences, we are now subject to, and putting the army upon a more respectable footing. Something must be done—important alterations must be made;—necessity requires, that our resources should be enlarged and our system improved; for without it, if the dissolution of the army should not be the consequence, at least, its operations must infallibly be feeble, languid, and ineffectual.

As I consider a proper and satisfactory provision for officers, in a manner, as the basis of every other regulation and arrangement necessary to be made, since without officers no army can exist, and unless some measures be devised to place those of ours in a more desirable situation, few of them would be able, if willing, to continue in it, I shall begin with a few reflections, tending to prove the necessity:—

Of a half pay and pensionary establishment.

A small knowledge of human nature will convince us, that, with far the greatest part of mankind, interest is the governing principle; and that, almost, every man, is more or less, under its influence. Motives of public virtue may for a time, or in particular instances actuate men to the observance of a conduct purely disinterested; but they are not of themselves sufficient to produce a persevering conformity to the re-

fined dictates and obligations of social duty. Few men are capable of making a continual sacrifice of all views of private interest, or advantage, to the common good. It is in vain to exclaim against the depravity of human nature on this account—the fact is so; the experience of every age and nation has proved it, and we must in a great measure change the constitution of man, before we can make it otherwise. No institution, not built on the presumptive truth of these maxims can succeed.

We find them exemplified in the American officers, as well as in all other men. At the commencement of the dispute, in the first effusions of their zeal, and looking upon the service to be only temporary, they entered into it, without paying any regard to pecuniary or selfish considerations. But finding its duration to be much longer than they at first suspected, and that instead of deriving any advantage from the hardships and dangers, to which they were exposed, they on the contrary, were losers by their patriotism, and fell far short even of a competency to supply their wants, they have gradually abated in their ardor; and with many, an entire disinclination to the service under its present circumstances has taken place. To this in an eminent degree, must be ascribed the frequent resignations dayly happening and the more frequent importunities for permission to resign, and from some officers of the greatest merit. To this also may we ascribe the apathy, inattention, and neglect of duty, which pervade all ranks and which will necessarily continue and increase while an officer instead of gaining anything is impoverished by his commission; and

conceives he is conferring not receiving a favor, in holding it. There can be no sufficient tie upon men, possessing such sentiments. Nor can any method be adopted to oblige those, to a punctual discharge of duty, who are indifferent about their continuance in the service and are often seeking a pretext to disengage themselves from it. Punishment in this case, will be unavailing; but when an officer's commission is made valuable to him and he fears to lose it, you may then exact obedience from him.

It is not indeed consistent with reason, or justice to expect that one set of men should make a sacrifice of property, domestic ease and happiness,—encounter the rigors of the field,—the perils and vicissitudes of War to obtain those blessings which every citizen will enjoy, in common with them without some adequate compensation. It must also be a comfortless reflection to any man, that after he may have contributed to securing the rights of his country at the risk of his life and the ruin of his fortune, there would be no provision made to prevent himself and family from sinking into indigence and wretchedness. Besides adopting some methods to make the provision for officers equal to their present exigencies, a due regard should be paid to futurity. Nothing, in my opinion, would serve more powerfully to reanimate their languishing zeal; and interest them thoroughly in the service, than a half-pay and pensionary establishment. This would not only dispel the apprehension of personal distress, [at] the termination of the war, from having thrown themselves [out] of professions and employments they might not have it in

[their] power to resume ; but would in a great degree relieve the painful anticipation of leaving their widows and orphans, a burthen on the charity of their country, should it be their lot to fall in its defence.

I am earnest in recommending this measure, because I know it is the general wish and expectation, and that many officers whom, upon every principle we should wish to retain in the service are only waiting to see whether something of the kind will, or will not take place, to be determined in their resolutions, either of staying in, or quitting it immediately ; and I urge my sentiments with the greater freedom, because I cannot, and shall not receive the smallest benefit from the establishment, and can have no other inducement for proposing it, than a full conviction of its utility and propriety.

I am sensible the expense will be a capital objection to it ; but to this I oppose the necessity.—The officers are now discontented with their situation ;—if some generous expedient is not embraced to remove their discontent, so extensive a desertion of the service will ensue, and so much discouragement be cast upon those, who remain as must wound it in a very essential manner. Every thing that has this effect has a tendency, at least, to protract the war, and, though dictated by a well-intended frugality, will I fear in the end prove erroneous economy.

Of completing the Regiments and altering their Establishment.

The necessity of the first in the most expeditious manner possible, is too self evident to need illustration,

or proof, and I shall, therefore only beg leave to offer some reflections on the mode. Voluntary inlistments seem to be totally out of the question; all the allurements of the most exorbitant bounties and every other inducement, that could be thought of, have been tried in vain and seem to have had little other effect than to increase the rapacity and raise the demands of those to whom they were held out. We may fairly infer, that the country [has] been already pretty well drained of that class of men [whose] tempers, attachments and circumstances disposed them to enter permanently or for a length of time, into the army, and that the residue of such men, who from different motives, have kept out of the army, if collected, would not augment our general strength, in any proportion to what we require. If experience has demonstrated that little more can be done by voluntary inlistments, some other mode must be concerted, and no other presents itself, than that of filling the regiments by drafts from the militia. This is a disagreeable alternative but it is an unavoidable one.

As drafting for the war, or for a term of years, would probably be disgusting and dangerous, perhaps impracticable, I would propose an annual draft of men, without officers, to serve till the first day of January, in each year; that on or before the first day of October preceding, these drafted men should be called upon to re-inlist for the succeeding year; and as an incitement to doing it, those being much better and less expensive than raw recruits, a bounty of twenty five dollars should be offered. That upon ascertaining, at this period, the number of men will-

ing to reengage, exact returns should be made to Congress of the deficiency in each regiment, and transmitted by them to the respective States, in order that they may have their several quotas immediately furnished, and sent on to Camp, for the service of the ensuing year, so as to arrive by, or before, the first day of January.

This method though not so good as that of obtaining men for the war, is perhaps the best our circumstances will allow, and as we shall always have an established corps of experienced officers, may answer tolerably well. It is the only mode I can think of for completing our battalions, in time that promises the least prospect of success; the accomplishment of which is an object of the last importance; and it has this advantage, that the minds of the people being once reconciled to the experiment, it would prove a source of continual supplies hereafter.

Men drafted in this manner should not, in the first instance receive any bounty, from the public, which being solemnly enjoined upon each state, and a stop put to the militia substitution laws, would probably be attended with very happy consequences. A number of idle, mercenary fellows would be thrown out of employment precluded from their excessive wages as substitutes for a few weeks or months; and constrained to inlist in the Continental army. In speaking of abolishing the militia su[b]stitution laws, it is not meant, to hinder a person, who might be drafted in the annual allotments, from procuring a substitute in his stead, himself in consequence being excused.

This indulgence would be admissible and considering all things, necessary, as there are many individuals, whose dispositions and private affairs would make them irreconcileably averse to giving their personal services for so long a duration, and with whom it would be impolitic to use compulsion. The allowance of substitution, upon a smaller scale—in the occasional coming out of the militia, for a few weeks, a month, or two, is the thing meant to be reprobated.—It is highly productive of the double disadvantage of preventing the growth of the army and depreciating our currency.

In the new establishment of a regiment, as apparent inconveniences result from the enemy's having no full colonels in their army, distinctly such, to exchange for ours, in case of captivity;—I would propose, that our batalions should be commanded by Lieutenant-Colonels commandant, with the pay of Colonel, and consist of the following officers and men; one Lieutenant-Colonel commandant — one Lieutenant colonel, a major, nine captains; nine lieutenants, nine ensigns, an adjutant, quarter master, paymaster, sergeant, drum and fife major, twenty seven sergeants, 18 drums and fifes, and five hundred and four rank and file: That these should be divided into eight companies: That a captain, lieutenant, ensign, three sergeants, two drums and fifes, and fifty six rank and file should be selected from the whole, to compose a company of light-infantry: That the infantry from each brigade be commanded by a field officer belonging to it,—if officers by the reduction of corps and

otherwise, unprovided for are not appointed to these commands; a mode preferable to that of drafting from the brigades, as a mean of doing those officers justice, and because the brigades would miss the field officers, drawn from them for this purpose; And, That the whole be commanded by General officers from the line, chosen by the commander in chief. This body would compose the flying army; and in conjunction with a body of horse would become extremely formidable and useful.

The benefits arising from a superiority in horse are obvious to those who have experienced them. Independent of such as you may derive from it in the field of action; it enables you very materially, to controul the inferior and subordinate motions of an enemy and to impede their knowle[d]ge of what you are doing, while it gives you every advantage of superior intelligence and, consequently, both facilitates your enterprises against them, and obstructs theirs against you. In a defensive war as in our case, it is peculiarly desireable because it affords great protection to the country, and is a barrier to those inroads and depredations upon the inhabitants which are inevitable when the superiority lies on the side of the invaders. The enemy fully sensible of the advantages, are taking all the pains in their power, to acquire an ascendency in this respect; to defeat which I would propose an augmentation of our cavalry, by adding a lieutenant, sergeant, corporal, and twenty-two privates, to each troop. The establishment will then be as follows:—

1 Colonel. 1 Lt. Colonel. 1 Major. 6 Captains. 12 lieutenants 6 Cornets 1 Adjutant 1 Qr. Master 1 Sadler 6 farriers 6 Qr. Masters Sergeants. 12 Sergeants 30 Corporals 6 Trumpeters 324 privates	All as usual, except 6 additional lieutenants.

There are and will continue four regiments of cavalry which composing a brigade, will require a Brigadier—Brigade Major—Quarter master, commissary and forage-master as usual. The men for this service can easily be gotten: the providing horses and accoutrements will be found to suffer some difficulty, yet will not be impracticable. The procuring horses should be undertaken by judicious officers from each regiment well skilled in them; and conducted in such a manner as to occasion no interference with each other. Let Sheldon's purchases be confined to the Eastward of the North River; Moylan's between the North River and Susquehanna; Baylor's between Susquehanna and James' River, and Bland's to the Southward of that. The number of horses, to be purchased, by each, ought to be determined, and an average price limited, disclosed only to the purchaser, with a strict injunction to conceal it as much as pos-

sible, because if once generally known, sellers would take advantage of it and part with none under the limitation. The accoutrements to be provided in the same districts, and by the same persons, but as some of these districts abound more in manufacturers, than others, all that can be engaged in each, in a certain stipulated time, ought to [be] secured, in order that the overplus, in one part, may supply the deficiency in another. And as these articles may be imported cheaper, and better in quality, than they can be made here, I would advise that at least, fifteen hundred setts should be sent for to France; with directions to divide them in small parcels and embark them in different vessels, that we may have a probability of getting at least a part, and not run the risk of sustaining a total loss and disappointment, by adventuring the whole in one bottom.

Of the Arrangement of the Army.

The establishment of a battalion being fixed under the last head, it remains to ascertain the number of battalions in order to form a proper arrangement. The number of battalions now in the field from each state stand thus:

New Hampshire	3	Maryland	7
Massachusetts	15	Virginia	15
Rhode Island	2	State do	1
Connecticut	8	Carolina	9
New York	4	German batalion	1
New Jersey	4	Hazen's	1
Pennsylvania	12	Additionals and parts	13
Col: W: Stewarts of do	1		—
Delaware	1	Total	97

By the foregoing list, it appears, that in regiments and parts of regiments there are Ninety-seven now in the field, but the state of them requires explanation. Out of nine from North Carolina, by a return of the 31st ultimo, only 572 rank and file are fit for duty. These, with 71 sick present and 137 on command, make 780 rank and file, which I suppose may be produced. The total number, rank and file in the nine regiments is 1079, the difference is accounted for in sick absent and on furlough; which is the only way, I am apprehensive, they ever will be accounted for. From this defective state of them, I should think it adviseable to throw the rank and file of the nine regiments, into two (they have been already reduced to three) and to send the supernumerary officers back to the State, to collect such men as on various pretences were left behind and deserters. And aided by the whole efficiency of the State, voluntary enlistments being, as I said before, out of the question to exert all their endeavors towards completing the seven other regiments, or such of them as Congress shall direct.—I am the more induced to recommend this measure, from the possibility of the enemy's attempting a more southern expedition next campaign. They may do it, in order to gain possession of the capitol of another State, which will give reputation to their arms in Europe, distress our trade and abridge our supplies; at the same time will enable administration to avail themselves, in another instance, of the illusory idea, they endeavor to hold up to the nation—to keep their hopes alive and extract fresh contributions;—that every State whose

capital they possess, is conquered.—These new raised troops, may, either, join this army, or aid South Carolina or Virginia, as circumstances shall point out.

It is needless to enter into a minute detail as to the precise state of the other troops. Let it suffice to say, that they bear too near an analogy to the specimen here given.

Virginia I understand, though not from any direct authority has resolved to draft towards the completion of her batalions; and as this mode seems to be the only one, calculated to answer the end, it is to be hoped, she will be able to furnish the full complement of fifteen including the State battalion. What plan Maryland has fallen upon or may adopt to fill her battalions, I know not, but as the powers of government are with her in full vigor, and the abilities of the State intirely adequate to the end, I think her original quota ought to be depended upon. Delaware must undoubtedly contribute one battalion; no change having happened since that portion was assigned her, sufficient to afford a plea for reducing it. In behalf of Pennsylvania much may be said; the exhausted state of her regiments—her loss of capitol and intestine divisions, ever destructive to the energy of government may perhaps incapacitate her for completing her thirteen regiments, now on foot. Suppose the number should be, for the present diminished to eight, and the State should exert herself to fill them in the first place. When this shall be accomplished, if her resources appear equal to any further efforts, she may proceed to raising the remaining

five.—New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, are fully competent to the quotas respectively required of them, and no abatement seems necessary with respect to either. We have reason to hope, their exertions will keep pace with their abilities, and that they will take decisive measures to send their several proportions into the field.

I am at a loss what to propose, concerning the German batalion, Hazen's regiment and the sixteen additionals. Appertaining to no particular state or States, they will have no chance of being filled by drafts, and as little by any other means. They must either remain weak and imperfect corps, be adopted by the States, or incorporated into each other and then, if possible, recruited. The first, upon every principle, ought not to be the case, and as the second would not be altogether eligible from the difficulty of apportioning them,—without dividing and subdividing the regiments,—the third seems to be the expedient to which we must have recourse. Let Maryland take the German battalion, wholly, as one of her eight, for she already claims a part of it; and then let the sixteen additionals, none of which are strong, some extremely weak, and others only partially organized,—be thrown into nine. There is this number of them, which comparatively speaking, are tolerably respectable, and have undergone a good deal of hard service in the course of the last campaign. These after having received the men out of the reduced corps, ought to be licensed, though a

barren experiment, to try what can be done by voluntary enlistments, throughout the Continent at large. Hazen's regiment might be added to them and united in the same privilege.

If these propositions are approved the whole number of battalions, on the establishment, will be eighty, and the total amount of them if complete 40,320, rank and file.

Upon this number of battalions, I shall make my arrangements. Whether full or not, they will require to be thrown into Brigades and divisions,—these again into wings and lines; all of which, for the sake of order, harmony and discipline, should be under distinct commands, capable of moving either jointly or separately, in the great machine, as circumstances shall require;—I would accordingly, to every four battalions, allow a Brigadier, to every three brigades, a Major General, and to the grand army three Lieutenant-Generals; one to command the right wing, another the left, and a third the second line. These three will always be necessary with the grand army, and unless it should be more divided next campaign, than we have reason to judge from present appearances, are all that will be requisite; yet it may be better to appoint four, on account of contingent services.

If it should be deemed improper to reduce the number of Pennsylvania battalions,* in the manner proposed, another Brigadier will be wanted; other-

* Since writing the above, I hear, the assembly of this state have passed a law, to draft men for their battalions, and I have arranged the army, accordingly in a schedule hereunto annexed.—*Note by Washington.*

wise, Twenty-two Brigadiers (two for the flying army) eight Major-Generals (one for the flying army) and three Lieutenant Generals, will be sufficient. To each brigade there should be a Quarter Master, Forage Master, Waggon Master and commissary; also armorers, a travelling forge, and some artificers.—In short, each Brigade should be an epitome of the great whole, and move by similar springs, upon a smaller scale.

In a young army, like ours, the office of Inspector General, principally for the purpose of instituting and carrying into practice an uniform system of manual and manœuvres must be extremely useful and advantageous. A number of assistants to this office will be required, as one man would be incapable of superintending the practice of the rules laid down, throughout the army; and unless this were carefully done, it would be of little avail to establish them. It would be proper, in my opinion to have one to each brigade; the benefits, resulting from which, would greatly overballance the consideration of expence.

Another new institution, I should wish to see take place in the army, and from which signal advantages would flow, is that of a Provost-Marshalcy. It should be composed of—

1 Capt. or Grand Provost, with the pay of dollars pr M.
4 Lieutenants or Provost Marshals, with the pay of dollars each per Month, to be stationed on the flanks and rear of the army.
1 Clerk, to register all official transactions of the corps regu-

lations for suttlers, &c. As his business will be pretty extensive and imply a degree of trust, he should have not less than dollars a Month.

1 Qr. Master-Sergeant, to draw provisions, &c., with the same pay as others of the same denomination.

2 Trumpeters.
2 Sergeants.
5 Corporal's one to be with each officer.
43 Provosts or privates.
} to have the same pay as is given in the horse.
4 Executioners with the pay of

The reason that the pay of this corps is rated so high is, that the offices of it are extremely troublesome; and require men, worthy of trust, and of great activity, to execute them, who would not be tempted by a less recompence to undergo the drudgery and fatigue. It is also, necessary, the officers should have some rank to enable them to maintain a proper degree of respect and command; for which purpose, that of captain for the principal and Lieutenant for his assistants will be sufficient. The intention of the corps requires, that the whole should be on horseback, armed and accoutred in the same manner as light horsemen. And as there is a necessity for good men to be employed in this service, who cannot well be enlisted, they ought to be drafted from the brigades.

The business of this corps is to watch over the good order and regularity of the army, in camp quarters, or on a march—to silence all quarrels, tumults, and riots, detect and hinder every species of marauding, — prevent straggling and other un-

soldierlike licenses among the troops—to apprehend spies, or persons whose not being able to give a good account of themselves may render them suspicious,—to establish and inforce good regulations among the suttlers, who should therefore be subject to the rules prescribed them by the grand provost, and of whom he is to keep a register, frequently inspecting their conduct, and seeing that the articles, they offer for sale, are good in quality and at reasonable prices. These, and many other particulars, are comprehended in the duties of the Provost Marshalcy; in the execution of which, continual patroles must be kept up, day and night throughout the limits of the camp and its environs.

There are many little crimes and disorders, incident to soldiery, which require immediate punishment, and which from the multiplicity of them, if referred to Court Martials, would create endless trouble, and often escape proper notice. These, when soldiers are detected in the fact, by the provost-marshals, they ought to have a power to punish on the spot, subject to proper limitations, and to such regulations as the commander-in-chief, according to the customs and usages of war, shall from time to time introduce.

Before I conclude this head, I shall recur a moment to the subject of altering, the establishment of a battalion, in the manner proposed under the preceding. Notwithstanding a company of light infantry is added to it, there will be a considerable reduction of officers, by having only two instead of three subalterns to a

company; and this reduction will be greatly increased, if intire regiments are disbanded and the fighting part of the staff taken from the line, not left separate and distinct as heretofore. It becomes an object of inquiry what is to be done with these reduced officers: To turn them adrift, without some provision, though they insist on the privilege, whenever it suits them to continue no longer in it, of relinquishing the service, wears at least the appearance of hardship, if not of injury; and would, no doubt, be a subject of clamor and complaint with them all. With some, who may have provided, and lain themselves out for a military life, it would be perhaps a real grievance I see but one method of obviating the embarrassments on this score and that not altogether unexceptionable. It is to be presumed and fervently to be wished, that every battalion retained in service, will be officered by Gentlemen of the most deserving characters and best military qualifications in it, and that can be selected from other corps belonging to the same state, which may happen to be dissolved, if any are.—After this, should there remain any worthy officers, unprovided for, and that cannot be disposed of in some useful capacity, they may be held on half pay, if not too numerous 'till vacancies, should occur in the line of their own States. Others may be dismissed with an allowance of land proportioned to their several ranks.

Of Rank.

Among the complicated causes of complaint, in this army, none seems to have taken deeper root, nor

to have given more general dissatisfaction than the lavish distribution of rank. No error can be more pernicious, than that of dealing out rank, with too prodigal a hand. The inconveniences of it are manifest: It lessens the value and splendor of it, in some measure degrades it into contempt, breeds jealousies and animosities and takes away one of the most powerful incitements to emulation.

To avoid this evil in future, it is proposed, that such of the staff as are entitled to it and ought to be commissioned, should be taken from the line. For instance, the Adjutant, Quarter Master and Pay Master of each regiment to be chosen from the regiment, they are to serve in; the two first from the subalterns, the other from the subalterns, or captains according to the fitness of the person. Each of these to enjoy double pay, but to hold no other rank than he is vested with, by his station in the line, in which he is regularly to rise; the adjutant and quarter master ceasing to be such, when they arrive at the rank of Captain, and the pay master when he attains to that of major. The Brigade-major and brigade Quarter Master to be officers from the brigade, not exceeding the rank of Captain and to resign those offices when they obtain a majority. The future appointments of Aid-de-camps to the Major and Lieutenant Generals to be from the line, and they * * * to hold no other ranks, than their commissions there give them a claim to. But as many good officers are now acting in this capacity, to the former, who originally belonged to the line,

and have at this time no appointments there, the rule ought to have no retrospective operation with regard to those already created; who ought upon every principle to preserve their present rank.

The Secretaries and Aid de Camps to the commander in chief ought not to be confined to the line for plain and obvious reasons. The number which the nature and extent of his business require, in addition to the many drawn from the line to fill the different offices of the staff, when it is considered, that they ought all to be men of abilities, may seem too large a draft upon the line. But a consideration still more forcible is, that in a service so complex as ours, it would be wrong and detrimental to restrict the choice; the vast diversity of objects, occurrences and correspondencies, unknown in one more regular and less diffusive constantly calling for talents and abilities of the first rate; men, who possess them, ought to be taken, wherever they can be found. With respect to their rank, those who are now in the station, ought in every point of view to retain that, which they now hold: some of them have been acting in these capacities a considerable length of time, others who quitted the line of the army to come into them, would in the common course of promotion have been at least as high as they now are, and almost all of them have been in the service, from an early period of the war; in future those who happen to be from the army, ought only to hold their rank in it; and rise, in course, like others in a similar predicament: it is submitted whether those taken out

of it ought to have any rank, and, if any, what; also what shall be the pay in both cases.

The Quarter Master General and Adjutant General, as they fill places of the highest trust and importance, and ought to be Gentlemen of the first military characters, should, if not of the line, have rank conferred upon them, and not less, than that of Colonel.

As it does not require military men to discharge the duties of Commissioners, Forage Masters and Waggon Masters, who are also looked upon as the money making part of the army, no rank should be allowed to any of them, nor indeed to any in the departments, merely of a civil nature. Neither is it, in my opinion proper, though it may seem a trivial and inconsequential circumstance, that they should wear the established uniforms of the army, which ought to be considered as a badge of military distinction.

These regulations will add weight and dignity to the fighting part of the army, render commissions valuable, and bringing rank into the estimation it ought to bear, will make it a stimulus to bravery and enterprize. At the same time, they will ease the public of a present, and, in case of half pay, of a considerable future expense.

In speaking of rank as a spur to enterprize, I am led, by the way, to hint an idea, which may be improved and turned to no small advantage. This is the institution of honorary rewards, differing in degree, to be conferred on those, who signalize them-

selves, by any meritorious actions, in proportion to the magnitude and brilliancy of the atchievement. These should be sacred to the purpose of their institution, and unattainable by loose recommendations, or vague, though arrogating pretensions:—given only upon authentic vouchers of real desert, from some proper board.—Congress have already adopted the idea, in particular instances; but it were to be wished, it could be extended to something more general and systematic. I have not sufficiently employed my thoughts upon the subject to digest them into a proposition, as to the nature, variety and extent of these rewards; but I would in general, observe, that they may consist in things of very little cost, or real value, and that the more diversified they are,—the better. If judiciously and impartially administered they would be well calculated to kindle that emulous love of glory and distinction, to which may be imputed far the greater part of the most illustrious exploits performed among mankind, and which is peculiarly necessary to be cherished and cultivated in a military life.

Of Promotion.

Irregular promotions have also been a pregnant source of uneasiness, discord and perplexity in this army. They have been the cause of numerous bickerings and resignations among the officers, and have occasioned infinite trouble and vexation to the Commander in Chief. To rectify mistakes introduced by accident, inadvertency, the interference of State appointments, or other means, employed much of the

time of the General officers, in the course of last campaign, and to less purpose than could be wished. We find, that however injuriously to the rights of others, an officer obtains irregular promotion, he is not the less tenacious of it; but it is with the utmost difficulty, if at all, he can be convinced of the propriety of doing an act of justice by abandoning his claim; though he will confess there was no just cause in the first instance, for giving him the preference. But as it did happen, he pretends his honor would be wounded, by suffering another, who is, in fact, his inferior to come over him, not considering how much that other was injured by the act, which gave him the superiority.

This, however shows how indispensably necessary it is, to have some settled rule of promotion universally known and understood and not to be deviated from, but for obvious and incontestible reasons. Extraordinary promotions founded upon acknowledged worth on the one hand and acknowledged demerit on the other, would rather excite emulation than murmurs. The prospect of not being shackled to the tedious gradations of ordinary succession, would teach the good officer to aspire to an excellence, that should entitle him to more rapid preferment; and the fear of being superseded, with dishonor, would teach indifferent ones to exert more activity, diligence and attention than they otherwise would; were they left in a listless security, certain of enjoying the honor and emoluments of progressive rank, let their conduct be ever so undeserving. But this is a matter

that ought to be handled with the utmost caution and delicacy. Nothing is more alarming and prejudicial than an injudicious infraction of rank. It discourages merit and foments discontent, and disorder. No departure from the established maxims of preferment is warrantable which is not founded upon the most apparent and unequivocal reasons.

With respect to the rule of promotion, proper to be observed; as I believe it to be consistent with the general sense and sentiment of the army, I would propose:—

That promotion should be regimental to the rank of Captain inclusively:—and from that, in the line of the state of the rank of Brigadier, inclusively; proceeding from that, in the line of the army at large.

The reason that promotions in the line of a State end with the Brigadier, and are extended from that to the line of the army, is, that, though the principle of having regard to the proportion of troops furnished by each state, in the appointments of general officers be in the main equitable and politic; yet the end proposed from it, will be sufficiently answered by limiting it to the creation of Brigadiers. If carried further, it will be injurious and become an incurable source of inquietude and disgust. When once a man is made a general officer, his circle of expectation widens, and he transfers his views from the line of his state to the line at large. He looks for promotion according to his seniority in the scale of general officers, and will not brook being overleaped by his juniors and inferiors, merely because he had the ill

fortune to enter the service of his country, in a smaller, or less populous State than they. These feelings and sentiments are universal and we have already in some instances, experienced their operation.

As four regiments, in the arrangement proposed, are required to constitute a Brigade and some states send less than that number to the field, a mode should be fallen upon to place this matter upon determinate principles, so as to prevent disputes hereafter. At present no difficulty can arise; because all the States, Delaware excepted, have Brigadiers; but time and accident may remove these, and give rise to contention unless some rule is previously fixed and declared.

It appears to me absolutely essential that Congress, the board of war, or some other body, or person, should exercise the sole power, when once the states have sent their regiments into the field, of giving and receiving commissions, filling vacancies and the like. If this should not be the case, I fear, the confusion will be endless. Erroneous promotions will probably be made, as heretofore, commissions antedated, officers dissatisfied, time lost in transmitting returns from one end of the Continent to the other, and waiting the arrangements upon them, the wheels of the whole machine, in consequence clogged and disordered, and infinite trouble incurred in putting them to rights again.

Of Cloathing the Army.

In regard to cloathing, experience has evinced, that the mode of providing hitherto in practice is by

no means adequate to the end; and that unless, our future efforts are more effectual, it will be next to impossible to keep an army in the field. I am in hopes, that valuable consequences, will accrue from a resolution of Congress of the 22d of November, directing, "That the several States from time to time, exert their utmost endeavours to procure, in addition to the allowances of cloathing heretofore made by Congress, supplies of blankets &c. for the comfortable subsistence of the officers and soldiers of their respective batalions."

As this puts the business into a greater variety of hands, than it has heretofore been in, and under the providence of a more diffusive attention, besides exciting a laudable rivalship, and operating upon the attachments of the different states,—it will probably be not a little instrumental in bringing us the needed supplies. But it is not an expedient that can be relied on altogether; of which, I doubt not, Congress are fully sensible and will only consider it as an auxiliary to their exertions. Indeed with several states, which happen to be more, or less the theatres of the war, and labor under other local impediments, it would be impracticable to furnish, but a very small part of their proportion.

For my own part, (with all deference I speak it) I have little conception that our extensive wants can be completely satisfied, in any other way, than by national or governmental contracts, between Congress and the Court of France. If we are to depend wholly upon the resources of our mercantile credit, they must

from the nature of things, be too limited and contingent. While the seas are crowded with the British navy, and no foreign maritime power is employed in the protection of our trade; the precariousness of remittances from this Continent must be so great, as to destroy or at least, sicken our commercial credit, and make it neither the interest nor within the abilities of private individuals to adventure so largely upon that foundation, as our necessities demand.

It is not in my power to judge with certainty what terms we may be upon with the French Court, what may have been already attempted, or may be now negociating, in the matter here suggested. Perhaps the project of our national contracts is not practicable, but if it is, it would certainly be our interest to embrace it. Besides placing our supplies, in so essential an article, on a sure and unfailing foundation, it would cement the connexion between the two countries, and, if discovered, prove a new and powerful topic of hostility between France and Britain. At the same time I do not think, that the fear of a discovery, from an unwillingness on the part of France, to force on an immediate war, supposing it to exist, need be any insuperable obstacle. Things might be conducted, in such an indirect and discreet manner, as to make them go on, in all appearance, as they do at present, and render a detection of the part the government bore in the affair, morally impossible.

The resolution, before cited, recommends to the respective states, the appointment "of one or more persons to dispose of the articles (procured) to the

officers and soldiers in such proportions as the General officers from the respective states, commanding in the army, shall direct, and at such reasonable prices as shall be assessed by the Clothier-General or his deputy and be in just proportion to the wages of the officers and soldiers, charging the surplus to the cost of the United States"; "adding that all cloathing hereafter to be supplied to the officers and soldiers of the continental army out of the public stores of the United States beyond the bounties already granted, shall be charged at the like prices." —The regulation contained in this clause is very wholesome, generous and equitable: It will give great satisfaction to the army, and conduce to removing the difficulties stated in the first section of these remarks, arising from the insufficiency of the present provision for officers. Nor do I know whether it admits of any improvement, by being made more definite. As the criterion of reasonableness in the prices seems to lie with the Clothier-General, or deputy, it may, perhaps be liable to uncertainty and abuse, and may be the subject of dispute between them and the officers. If, to prevent this, a catalogue of rates could be established as the standard, it would be desireable, but perhaps, the great difference and variety in the quality and kinds, of goods, may not admit of such a measure.

It will, of course, be necessary for each state to have agents for importing and purchasing goods, towards its quota, of supplies; and the Clothier General should have a deputy in every state, for purchasing

all over plus articles wanted in his department, "provided that effectual measures be taken by each state for preventing any competition between their agents or the Clothier General and his agents, who are severally directed to observe the instructions of the respective states, relative to the prices of cloathing purchased within such state."[1] There should also be a sub clothier or clerk from every state, constantly with the army; to receive and distribute the cloathing, see that the goods brought correspond with the invoices, and that the issues are made conformable to some general rule established to do justice to the public, to regiments and to individuals.

The rule, I would propose for issuing and distributing cloathing is this: That the captains of companies in the first place give certificates, containing the names of his men, with the particular wants of each:—That these be digested into a regimental return, signed by the officer commanding the regiment; That the pay master draw the cloathing, lodging the regimental return, so signed, with the Clothier as a voucher for the delivery, who is to keep an account with the regiment for the same; That the pay master, retaining the certificates for his own government, distribute the cloathing to the men, agreeable to them, taking their receipts and keeping an exact account with every individual, which he can easily do, as he is supposed to have accounts open for their monthly pay: And, that all cloathing, delivered to the men, be given credit for in the pay rolls, with accounts, signed by the sub

[1] Resolve 22d Nov.

clothiers annexed, for the information of the Pay Master General.

To make soldiers look well and bestow proper attention and care upon their cloaths, they ought to receive them at stated periods. This gives a taste for decency, and uniformity and makes the officers regardful of the appearance of the men ; a matter of no small moment in an army, as tending to promote health, and foster a becoming pride of dress, which raises soldiers in their own esteem and makes them respectable to their enemy.

The periods I would fix upon for delivery, are on the first days of June and January. In June should be given a waistcoat with sleeves, flannel, if to be had, two pair of linnen overalls, one shirt, a black stock of hair, or leather, a small round hat bound and a pair of shoes. In January, a waistcoat to be worn over the former, close in the skirts and double breasted, resembling a sailor's ——, to have a collar and cuff of a different color, in order to distinguish the regiment, a pair of breeches, woolen overalls, yarn stockings, shirt, woolen cap, and a blanket when really necessary. Watch coats ought if possible, to be provided for sentinels. Whatever might be furnished more than these, the soldier ought to have stopped out of his pay, upon the terms fixed by Congress, in their late resolve ; a list of the cloathing to be kept by the commanding officer of each company, an inspection into them made at least once a week, and punishment inflicted or restitution made for every article missing, unless well accounted for.

If it could be done which is much to be doubted, it would be well to discriminate the troops of each state—by the color of their cloaths and each regiment by that of the collar and cuff.

If this plan could be adopted and a quantity of supernumerary articles laid in, for occasional demands, our men would appear infinitely better, be much healthier, and the army a great deal stronger, than it commonly is.

The Clothier-General ought to be authorized and directed to enter into contracts, for as large quantities as possible of shoes and stockings to be manufactured in the Country. These are articles, that can least be dispensed with, and the deficiency of which we have most severely felt.—A Mr. Henry, of Lancaster, I am told, would contract for one or two hundred thousand pair of shoes, annually, to be paid for in raw hides. The number of cattle killed for the consumption of the army enable us to make this contract to great advantage.

Of the Quarter Master General's Department.

In this department are comprehended Forage Masters, Waggon masters, artificers, &c., with all their appendages. It is a department of great trust and magnitude, on the due administration of which all the operations of an army essentially depend. The person who fills it ought to be a military character—a man of abilities of business and activity, well versed in the resources of the country and of sufficient prudence and rectitude, to exercise his office,

in drawing the necessary supplies, in a manner, least distressing to the inhabitants.

His duty requiring him to be almost constantly with the army, to see and know its wants, superintend the movements of his department in the different branches, and to prevent or rectify the abuses that may be creeping into it,—he will stand in need of assistants, to execute the business, abroad under his direction. It is not easy to ascertain the number of these assistants, that will be requisite; circumstances vary and must govern. But I cannot forbear observing, that some measures ought to be taken to restrain that extravagant rage of deputation, now too prevalent among us. It has served to create a number of mere sinecures, and to render the execution of every office more perplexed, more expensive and less satisfactory than formerly, both to the army and country.

I should imagine, that a great part of the business of this department might be managed by contracts with people capable of performing them and bound by sufficient securities. This would unburthen the public of large sums now paid in stationary wages, often for temporary purposes, and would perhaps answer the end of supplies better. Standing wages are very apt to beget indolence and inattention, and commonly continue an incumbrance, when the cause that gave rise to appointments ceases to exist, from the difficulty of throwing off the persons to whom they were given; on which account they ought to be avoided, whenever any point can be effected without them.

I am, also unacquainted with the number of persons the Quarter Master General may find it necessary to employ in camp or elsewhere as store keepers clerks and the like; but under the of these remarks I have given my opinion of all the Assistant Quarter Masters required in the subordinate duties of the office in camp. More than these should not be allowed. Division Quarter Masters, Forage Masmasters and Waggon Masters should be abolished.

Who may be in contemplation to fill the place of Quarter Master General is as yet to me unknown, and equally indifferent, provided he be a fit person. But in making the appointment, not a moment's time should be lost. The least procrastination will be extremely prejudicial as the season is already far advanced, which we ought to be improving in preparations for the next campaign. Every thing is to be done;—the old waggons to be repaired, new ones provided, horses and pack saddles procured, Bell tents for arms and tents for the men, haversacks and knapsacks made, tools of different kinds prepared, and artificers and waggoners engaged.

And here I shall take occasion to declare, that however inconvenient it may be to the Quarter Masters to provide or expensive to the public to pay for waggoners, it ought, nevertheless, at all events, to be done. Soldiers are drafted for waggoners and many other purposes, by which their services in the line are entirely superseded, while they actually compose a part of our numbers, and appear on the returns to compose part of our strength. This may be tolerated in

quarters or in a season of inaction, though even then the soldiers would be better employed in learning the duties of their profession; but it ought not to be submitted to in the progress of the campaign, as has been of late the invariable practice.

Several new regulations, will I believe be necessary in the Forage department, the particulars of which, the Gentlemen at the head of it will be best able to point out.

One thing I shall observe, that the manner of paying the Forage Master has been a subject of discussion. It has been suggested that the allowing a commission instead of a fixed determinate pay, opens a wide door to fraud, and peculation. In mentioning this not the least insinuation is intended to the prejudice of the gentleman, now acting in this capacity, it is merely hinted, as a matter worth consideration on general principles.—I think however, it may be safely asserted, that the assistant forage masters are not in general so accurate as they ought to be, in receiving or delivering forage, and that depending too much upon the farmer's reports and their own conjectures the public pays for much more than they receive.

We have to lament that we are suffering exceedingly from a scarcity of forage; an article not less essential to the well being of an army, than that of provisions. Should we be able to shift through the winter, this want will be no small obstacle and delay to our operations in the spring; especially as we are exhausting the small stock now on the spot, which will

probably be the immediate scene of them. We have numbers of horses dying dayly for the want of provender; what then must become of them, when it grows scarcer and the distance to fetch it greater? How are magazines to be formed, under these circumstances? And without magazines how are our horses to be supported in the early part of the next campaign; when their number shall be greatly augmented. These are serious questions, not easy of solution, and are proposed that every exertion may be made to avert an evil of no small consequence.

A waggon Master General is a necessary officer, and there would be a great saving to the public, if the duties of the office were discharged by an active careful man, who would make a judicious choice of deputies, and not be himself above his business, as has been the case with most of those heretofore in this line. They have been apt to indulge fantastical notions of rank and importance; and assume titles very inapplicable to their stations; which have served to destroy a great part of their usefulness; and make them the objects of general contempt, and resentment. This inconvenience must be obviated in future by allowing no rank to any of them, from the highest to the lowest.

The number of assistants requisite cannot be precisely ascertained, as it must depend upon the number of waggons. There must be one to each brigade to superintend the baggage waggons; but how many will be wanted to take the charge of forage, provisions and for a variety of other purposes, I am

at a loss to judge. This must be left to the quarter master general, of whose department, this is a branch, and to the waggon master General, who is the immediate agent. One deputy however to every twenty waggons appears to me fully sufficient.

The men employed in this capacity should be plain, sober, diligent men, acquainted with the management of horses and waggons, and untainted with absurd fancies of gentility; who would understand the end and design of their appointment, and not consider the means of making themselves useful, as a degradation of their imaginary dignity.

I shall close this head with an observation on the mode hitherto in practice of estimating and paying, for damages done by the army in quarters, or in the field; which appears to me objectionable, on several accounts. The payments have usually been made, on certificates of appraisement by farmers or other persons in the neighborhood of the parties injured —chosen by themselves and whenever the accounts were presented and there was money in hand to pay them. This mode is unequal and gives the injured party an evident advantage over the public; and has no doubt in many instances been attended with gross impositions. Besides this defect, it would probably promote the service and be productive of more regularity, if a fixed time was appointed, when these payments should be made. There would not be such frequent large drafts upon the Quarter Master, in the most active part of a campaign, when he wants money for more pressing exigencies, and the entries of his

disbursements might be made with more order and exactness if these were deferred to a time of greater leisure. It is submitted in the first place whether the appointment of two, or more persons would not be proper to accompany the army, constantly, for the purpose of ascertaining damages, with a like number of persons chosen by the party interested; whose certificates should be a sufficient justification to the Quarter Master, for paying them; and in the second place, what time or times would be proper to satisfy demands of this nature. Perhaps two different periods would be best, both in the interval of tranquility, —one a little after the entrance of the army into Winter Quarters, and the other just before the opening of the campaign.

Of the Commissary's department.

This department has been all along in a very defective and for some time in a very deplorable situation. One important change has already taken place, in it; since which it has been with the utmost difficulty we were able to keep the army together. Whether this proceeded from the revolution being ill-timed, or too great, from the difficulties in the way, of executing the office being multiplied, or from the present gentleman at the head of it, not having yet had leisure to digest his plan and form his connexions,—I shall not undertake to determine. But unless a very considerable alteration shortly takes place I see no prospect of adequate supplies for the succeeding campaign. To attempt supplying the army from hand to mouth

(if I may be allowed the phrase) scarcely ever having more than two or three days provisions before hand, and sometimes being as much in arrears, is a dangerous and visionary experiment. We shall ever be liable to experience want in the most critical junctures, as we have frequently done heretofore; and to suspend or forego the most interesting movements on account of it. Whether the first establishment of this department—the present—or the mode of supplying the army by contract at certain stipulated rates, be preferable, is a question not for me to decide, though well worth a strict and candid examination. But I shall not scruple in explicit terms to declare, that unless ample magazines are laid up in the course of this winter and the approaching spring, nothing favorable is to be looked for, from the operations of the next campaign; but our arms, enfeebled by the embarrassments of irregular and fluctuating supplies of provisions will reap no other fruits than disgrace and disappointment. To obviate this, no possible exertion should be omitted; the ablest and best qualified men in the several states, whence provisions are drawn, should be called forth to aid in the matter,—such as are acquainted with the resources of the country and may have been conversant in business of the kind.

The choosing of fit places for magazines in defensive war, is equally momentous and difficult. Expence and hazard are naturally incident to them; because the possible movements of an enemy must ever be conjectural and it is precarious when, where, and often, how they are to be removed. According to

present appearances, magazines any where in the rear of the army from Lancaster to the North River would not be amiss, and the more numerous they are, the better; as their multiplicity, decreasing the importance of each, would leave no one a sufficient object of enterprize; enhance the trouble of destroying them, and lessen the labor and expence of forming them in the first instance.

Whether the Commissaries should be dependent upon the Quarter masters for teams, or be empowered to provide for themselves, is a matter they can perhaps best settle between themselves. But it is necessary they should come to some agreement, or determination upon the subject, to remove the inconveniences hitherto incurred on this score; the commissaries having frequently imputed the deficiency of supplies to a want of the means of transportation.

It is a point of prodigious consequence and in which we have been amazingly deficient that vinegar, vegetables, and soap should be regularly, and abundantly furnished to the army; nothing contributing more than this to the health, comfort and contentment of soldiers. Certainly there are no insurmountable obstacles to doing it; and if not, no pains should be spared to accomplish so valuable an end.

A ration should be more precisely defined than it now is, and the quantity of spirituous liquors allowed the soldier, fixed. It should also be considered whether any and what quantity should be allowed officers at the public expence; at all events the Commissaries should be obliged to provide for them, if at their own charge, as they would otherwise have no

opportunity of getting it, and in the hard and fatiguing service they pass through, it is indispensable, even to the most temperate men.

Of the Hospital department.

There ever have been, and, I fear will continue difficulties and imperfections in this department. What they are particularly, or whence arising, it is not in my power minutely to enter into, as I have neither had leisure nor opportunity to examine its present constitution with a critical eye. One powerful reason, no doubt, of its not producing so fully the advantages to be hoped for, from it, is the extreme scarcity of proper supplies for the accommodation of the sick.

But one thing, which has had a very pernicious influence, is the continual jealousies and altercation, subsisting between the hospital and regimental surgeons, they seem always to be at variance, and recriminating the sufferings of the sick upon each other. The regimental surgeons complain, that for want of medicines and other necessaries, they are disabled from giving that assistance in slight cases, and in the first stages of more dangerous complaints, which would serve to check their progress to maturity and save the lives of the soldiery. The hospital surgeons reply, that their stores are incapable of bearing the excessive drafts, which the profusion and carelessness of the regimental surgeons, would make upon them, if indulged in their demands.

I shall not attempt to decide the merits of this

dispute, nor can I conceive any adequate mode of adjusting the difference. But one would imagine, it might not be impossible, to fix some general rule of allowance, by which the supplies to regimental surgeons might be regulated; and to make them accountable for the right and œconomical application of what they received.

At all events, as the accommodation of the sick and the preservation of men's lives are the first and great objects to be consulted; the regimental surgeons ought not to be destitute of a reasonable quantity of medicines and other conveniences, of which the sick stand in need. The ill effects of it are many and glaring. Either men, at every slight indication of disease, must be sent away to distant hospitals, and the army unnecessarily deprived of the services of numbers, who, if the means were at hand, might in a day or two be restored; or they must remain without proper assistance till their diseases confirm themselves, and with regard to many, get beyond the power of cure.

Other ill consequences, that have attended the sending so many men away to a distance from the army, are desertions, and the waste of arms and cloathing; for which reasons it ought to be avoided as much as possible. To prevent these evils, as far as it can be done, a field officer is stationed at each hospital to see the arms of the soldiers, carefully deposited at their admission into it, take care of them in their convalescent state, and send them on to join their regiments, under proper officers, so soon as they are fit for duty.

Of the Pay Master General's Department.

This department is well conducted so far as depends upon the Gentleman at the head of it; but the want of money, which too frequently happens, is extremely injurious to our affairs. It is unnecessary to observe, that besides feeding and cloathing a soldier well, nothing is of greater importance than paying him with punctuality, and it is perhaps more essential in our army, than in any other, because our men are worse supplied, and more necessitous and the notions of implicit subordination, not being as yet, sufficiently, ingrafted among them, they are more apt to reason upon their rights, and readier to manifest their sensibility of any thing that has the appearance of injustice to them; in which light they consider their being kept out of their pay, after it is due.—Nor does the evil end here; the inhabitants, who through choice, accident, or necessity have any pecuniary concerns with the army, finding themselves frequently disappointed in the payments they have a right to expect, grow dissatisfied and clamorous;—the credit of the army, and which is nearly the same thing, the credit of the continent is impaired—our supplies, of course, are impeded, and the price of every article we want, raised. This circumstance is not among the least causes of the depreciation of our currency.

Of the Commissary of Muster's Departt.

The duties of this officer are, I believe, discharged with fidelity and care by the Gentleman at the head

of it. No complaint has ever come to my ear, either of him, or his deputies.

Of the Commissary of Prisoners' Departt.

The business of this department, as far as I am yet capable of judging is in good hands and going on a proper train.

Of Auditors of Accounts.

The want of such an institution has been much felt, and I am very happy it is at length adopted. The sooner the gentlemen appointed enter upon the execution of their office, the better, as much necessary business waits their regulating hand. The public has sustained a loss of many thousands, which might have been prevented, by the negligence, dishonesty, and death of numberless officers.

Having run through the different distributions of the army as composed of horse and foot, with all the departments depending thereon, and offered such remarks as occurred to me on the several subjects,—I proceed to the mention of two departments commonly considered as separate and distinct—the Artillery and Engineering.—

Of the Artillery Department.

This department, if the arrangements and measures in contemplation meet with proper countenance and support, bids fair to be upon a very respectable establishment. A plan was agreed upon not long since, between General Knox and myself, for the formation

of four battalions, which was intended to be presented to Congress; that if approved by them, it might be recommended to the several States. It is now submitted to the consideration of the Committee.—

We have, at this time, three imperfect battalions of Artillery in the field, besides some detached companies, which have never been regularly incorporated. These together make 1370, including officers; to which, Harrison's battalion of Virginia being added, would amount to 1970. The deficiency of the four battalions on this State, will be 910, which, it is proposed, should be raised by the different states agreeable to the following arrangement.

Virginia, Harrison	10	Companies @ 60 each		600	
Maryland, to raise	2	do.	do.	120	
A battalion of	12	Companies.			720
Pensylvania, Proctor	8	present.	251		
To raise			229	480	
Jersey, Clark and Randall	2	do.	55		
To raise			65	120	
Raised at large, Lee, Porter, Jones, to be thrown into	2	want g.	95 25	120	720
					1440
Connecticut, &c., Lamb		present.		399	
New York, Beauman & Doughty	2	Cos: pret.	73		
To raise			47	120	
New Hampshire, to raise	2	Co.		120	
Rhode Island, do	1	"		60	
Wanting for the battalion				21	
1 battalion					720
Massachusetts, Crane	12	Comp.		497	
To raise				223	
1 battalion	12	Comps.			720
Four battalions, Amtg. to					2880

In the above are included all the officers except the Brigadier, field and staff officers; and, if completed would prevent the necessity, of the pernicious practice of drafting from the battalions.

General Knox communicated to me, more than two months ago an estimate of ordnance and ordnance stores; which he had prepared to send to the board of War, for the supplies of the next campaign, agreeable to their request. Nothing more is necessary than an enquiry what has been done in consequence.

I shall take the liberty in this place to give it as my opinion, that any arsenal or depositary of stores at Albany, in the present situation of the North River is improper. It would be too easily accessible and exceedingly liable to be surprized and destroyed. Indeed it ought to be a general rule to have every kind of magazines as far advanced into the interior parts of the country, and as remote from the sea-coast or from the sides of navigable rivers, as the nature and design of them will permit. We have seen the effects of not attending duly to this precaution.

Of the Engineering Department.

The Gentleman at the head of this department appears to be a man of science knowledge in his profession and zeal in the cause. He complains, that he has not assistant Engineers enough to execute the various duties of his office, and wishes for an augmentation of the number. He also proposes that three companies of workmen should be formed to be instructed in the fabrication of all kinds of field works, so far as relates to the manual and mechani-

cal part, whose business it should be to teach the fatigue parties to execute the works with celerity, an exactness, which could not otherwise be expected from men entirely unpracticed in the matter. These companies, he would have to, consist of a Captain, three lieutenants, four serjeants, four corporals and sixty privates each :—the commissioned officers to be intelligent and skilled in some branches of the mathematics ; the non-commissioned officers to be sober, sensible men and capable of writing a legible hand, and the whole corps to consist of men of good characters, of diligence and integrity. In consideration of these qualifications, and the extra duty, confinement and hazard they must encounter, being always foremost in danger to repair the injuries done any fortification by the enemy's fire, and to prosecute works, in the face of it, the corps is to have extraordinary pay. This proposition appears reasonable and promises a degree of utility, that out weighs the cost.

These companies, if formed, are to be solely under the direction of the Chief Engineer and to have the care of all the intrenching tools of the army.

Conclusion.

I shall now in the last place beg leave to subjoin a few matters, unconnected with the general subject of these remarks, or not recollected in their proper places, to which the attention of the Committee is requested.

What is to be done with the foreign officers, who have been commissioned and never designated to any

particular command; and who cannot without displacing others, be brought into the line? Such of them as possess any competency of military knowledge, and are otherwise men of character, I have sometimes thought, if they understood enough of our language might be employed as Assistant Inspectors. At other times, I have judged it best, if practicable, to form them into a corps by themselves, but most of them being field officers, the difficulty of getting men for such a corps, unless deserters and prisoners were enlisted, (which I have ever looked upon as impolitic) appeared to me an insurmountable objection.

The enemy have set every engine at work against us, and have actually called savages, and even our own slaves to their assistance;[1]—would it not be well

[1] The difficulty encountered in completing the Continental army suggested to General Varnum the propriety of raising a battalion of negroes to make up the proportion of Rhode Island in the Continental army. He submitted the suggestion to Washington, January 2, 1778, who sent it to the Rhode Island Executive without a word of approval or disapproval. The Legislature of that State at once passed a law, not without some opposition being made, allowing any able-bodied negro, mulatto, or Indian man-slave in the State to enlist in the two battalions raising for Continental service, and the act of enlisting should liberate a slave from any kind of servitude, while entitling him to all the wages, bounties, and encouragements given by Congress to a white soldier enlisting into their service. The Governor hoped to enlist three hundred slaves, and in August the "newly raised black regiment," under Col. Greene, did good service at the battle of Rhode Island.

The proposition of Varnum is the first suggestion of the kind to be found at that time. A few days after the General had sent in his letter, Col. John Laurens wrote to his father, making a similar proposal to augment the Continental force "from an untried source." "I would bring about a two-fold good; first, I would advance those who are unjustly deprived of the rights of mankind to a state which would be a proper gradation between abject slavery, and perfect liberty, and besides I am persuaded that if I could obtain authority for the purpose, I would have a corps of such men trained, uniformly clad, equipped and ready in every respect to act at the opening of

to employ two or three hundred Indians against General Howe's army the ensuing campaign? There is a Gentleman now in camp, who would I imagine, be able to bring half that number of Cherokees, and I should think, the Reverend Mr. Kirkland, might be able to influence a like number of the Northern tribes. Such a body of Indians joined by some of our woodmen would probably strike no small terror into the British and foreign troops, particularly the new comers. The good resulting from the measure, if these savages can be kept in the field at so great a distance from their native haunts—would more than compensate for the trouble and expence they might cost us.

Col. Morgan, when he left camp desired to know

the next campaign. The ridicule that may be thrown on the color I despise, because I am sure of rendering essential service to my country. I am tired of the languor with which so sacred a war as this is carried on."—14 January, 1778. Henry Laurens seems to have raised obstacles, for the son returned to the subject on February 2d: there was "that monstrous popular prejudice, open mouthed against me, of undertaking to transform beings almost irrational, into well-disciplined soldiers, of being obliged to combat the arguments, and perhaps the intrigues, of interested persons. . . . The hope that will spring in each man's mind, respecting his own escape, will prevent his being miserable. Those who fall in battle will not lose much; those who survive will obtain their reward. Habits of subordination, patience under fatigues, sufferings and privations of every kind, are soldierly qualifications, which these men possess in an eminent degree. . . . You ask, what is the General's opinion upon this subject? He is convinced that the numerous tribes of blacks in the southern parts of the continent, offer a resource to us that should not be neglected. With respect to my particular plan, he only objects to it, with the arguments of pity for a man who would be less rich than he might be." Laurens had asked his father to give him a number of able-bodied slaves instead of leaving him a fortune.

The project does not appear to have come to any issue at this time. See *Washington to Henry Laurens*, 20 March, 1779, and *Washington to John Laurens*, 10 July, 1782.

whether he might engage any good riflemen to serve during the next campaign in the light corps. He thinks he should be able to procure many, under assurances that they would serve with him, and be dismissed at the end of the campaign.

The difficulty of getting waggoners and the enormous wages given them would tempt one to try any expedient to answer the end on easier and cheaper terms. Among others it has occurred to me, whether it would not be eligible to hire negroes in Carolina, Virginia and Maryland for the purpose. They ought however to be freemen, for slaves could not be sufficiently depended on. It is to be apprehended they would too frequently desert to the enemy to obtain their liberty, and for the profit of it, or to conciliate a more favorable reception would carry off their waggon horses with them.

A resolve of Congress, of the 19th instant, provides that all continental officers, prisoners with the enemy either while in confinement with them or on parole among us "so long as they continue officers of the United States," should be entitled to their pay and rations, liable to a deduction for what they may have received while present with the enemy; and that all flying camp or Militia officers should be entitled to the same while in confinement with them only. This resolve excluded from pay all officers liberated on parole, who have not actual appointments in the Continental Army;—will it not be deemed a hardship and injustice to such officers;—especially to those who merely from their absence

have been neglected in arrangements posterior to their capture; as has been too much the case?— While they continue prisoners, whether in possession of the enemy or out on parole, they can have little opportunity of prosecuting any business for a livelihood, and must be in a distressful situation, unless they have a private fortune sufficient to maintain them.—

It has in many instances happened, that officers in captivity have been omitted in promotions made in their absence; upon which a question has arisen whether there should not be a restoration of rank, with respect to those who are men of merit. It seems but reasonable there should.—

Several new regulations will, I imagine be found useful in the articles of war; which the Judge Advocate, from his official experience of the deficiency, can more accurately indicate. One thing we have suffered much from, is the want of a proper gradation of punishments: the interval between a hundred lashes and death is too great and requires to be filled by some intermediate stages. Capital crimes in the army are frequent, particularly in the instance of desertion: actually to inflict capital punishment upon every deserter, or other heinous offender would incur the imputation of cruelty, and by the familiarity of the example, destroy its efficacy: on the other hand to give only a hundred lashes to such criminals is a burlesque on their crimes rather than a serious correction, and affords encouragement to obstinacy and imitation. The Courts are often in a manner

compelled by the enormity of the facts to pass sentences of death, which I am as often obliged to remit, on account of the number in the same circumstances, and let the offenders pass wholly unpunished. This would be avoided, if there were other punishments short of the destruction of life, in some degree adequate to the crime : and which might be, with propriety substituted.[1]

Crimes too are so various in their complexions and degrees, that to preserve the just rule of proportions, there ought to be a gradual scale of punishments; in order to which, whipping should be extended to any number at discretion, or by no means, limited lower than five hundred lashes.

Upon the whole, Gentlemen, I doubt not you are fully impressed with the defects of our present military system, and the necessity of speedy and decisive measures, to put it upon a satisfactory footing. The disagreeable picture, I have given you, of the wants and sufferings of the army, and the discontents reigning among the officers, is a just representation of evils equally melancholy and important; and unless effectual remedies be applied without loss of time, the most alarming and ruinous consequences are to be apprehended. I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] This question of punishment was not acted upon by Congress, and on 24 August, 1778, there being eleven prisoners under the sentence of death, and the same objections as are mentioned in this letter existing against such wholesale examples, a council of the general officers recommended that "severe hard labor" be made the intermediate punishment between one hundred lashes and death, and such labor to be expended in repairing roads, fortifications, and other necessary public works.

TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 30 January, 1778.

SIR,

I have duly received your letter of the 19th ultimo. It is unnecessary to enter minutely into its contents, since the enclosed resolutions of Congress will show you, that the matter is now put upon a footing different from that mentioned by Mr. Boudinot; which, at the same time, you will be pleased to consider as final and decisive, and to regulate your measures accordingly. I should be glad, as soon as possible, to be favored with your determination in consequence, especially on those parts numbered in the margin of the resolves; to which I must request a speedy and explicit answer.

There is one passage of your letter, which I cannot forbear taking particular notice of. No expression of personal politeness to me can be acceptable, accompanied by reflections on the representatives of a free people, under whose authority I have the honor to act. The delicacy I have observed, in refraining from every thing offensive in this way, entitled me to expect a similar treatment from you. I have not indulged myself in invective against the present rulers of Great Britain, in the course of our correspondence, nor will I even now avail myself of so fruitful a theme.

The quartermasters, permitted to go with the clothing, appeared to me sufficient for the purpose; for, though the prisoners are in different places, yet they lie chiefly on a direct communication. If upon any future occasion you should conceive a greater number requisite, you will inform me of it previously

to their coming, and I shall be ready to comply, as far as I think myself justified. Whether your sending out more than one British quartermaster was an encroachment upon the spirit of the agreement between us, shall not now be matter of discussion. But can it be said there is any thing in it, that can reconcile the coming out of Captain McCleod? I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO HENRY LAURENS.

VALLEY FORGE, 31 January, 1778.

SIR,

I this morning received your favor of the 27th instant. I cannot sufficiently express the obligation I feel to you, for your friendship and politeness upon an occasion in which I am so deeply interested. I was not unapprized, that a malignant faction had been for some time forming to my prejudice; which, conscious as I am of having ever done all in my

[1] "A letter from Congress will accompany this, containing two resolutions relative to prisoners. You will perceive by them, that Congress go upon the presumption of our furnishing our prisoners in the enemy's hands wholly and entirely with provisions. Their fixing no rule for liquidating and accounting for the rations heretofore supplied by the enemy is a proof, that they do not intend them to continue, but expect our prisoners will hereafter be altogether victualled by ourselves. This is a matter, to which it will be necessary to attend carefully, both that a competent supply may be immediately ready for the purpose, and that there may be no deficiency in future; otherwise the consequences may be dreadful, for the past conduct of the enemy gives too much reason to apprehend, that they would not be very apt to relieve wants, to which we had undertaken wholly to administer."—*Washington to Boudinot*, 3 February, 1778. "As to clothing, I have no doubt but General Howe has denied us the liberty of purchasing. This is now a subject of difference between us, and the design of our insisting that he shall victual his troops in our hands by a certain day is to oblige him to consent to that measure."—*Washington to Gates, President of the Board of War*, 26 January, 1778.

power to answer the important purposes of the trust reposed in me, could not but give me some pain on a personal account. But my chief concern arises from an apprehension of the dangerous consequences, which intestine dissensions may produce to the common cause.

As I have no other view than to promote the public good, and am unambitious of honors not founded in the approbation of my country, I would not desire in the least degree to suppress a free spirit of inquiry into any part of my conduct, that even faction itself may deem reprehensible. The anonymous paper handed to you exhibits many serious charges, and it is my wish that it should be submitted to Congress. This I am the more inclined to, as the suppression or concealment may possibly involve you in embarrassments hereafter, since it is uncertain how many or who may be privy to the contents.

My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets, which it is of the utmost moment to conceal. But why should I expect to be exempt from censure, the unfailing lot of an elevated station? Merit and talents, with which I can have no pretensions of rivalship, have ever been subject to it. My heart tells me, that it has been my unremitted aim to do the best that circumstances would permit; yet I may have been very often mistaken in my judgment of the means, and

may in many instances deserve the imputation of error. I cannot forbear repeating, that I have a grateful sense of the favorable disposition you have manifested to me in this affair, and beg you will believe me to be, with sentiments of real esteem and regard, Sir, &c.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

VALLEY FORGE, February 1, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I will just write you a few lines in acknowledgment of your letter of the fourteenth ultimo, which was detained by the posts, not being able to cross Susquehanna, till the evening before last. I congratulate you upon the birth of another daughter, and Nelly's good health; and heartily wish the last may continue, and the other be a blessing to you.

The money received for your land was, I think, well applied, unless you could have laid it out for other lands more convenient; which method I should have preferred, as land is the most permanent estate we can hold, and most likely to increase in its value. Your mamma is not yet arrived, but if she left Mount Vernon on the twenty sixth ultimo, as intended, may, I think, be expected every hour.[1] Meade[2] set off yesterday (as soon as I got notice of her intention)

[1] Mrs. Washington arrived in camp a day or two after this letter was written. She wrote to Mrs. Warren: "The general is in camp in what is called the great valley on the Banks of the Schuylkill. Officers and men are chiefly in Hutts, which they say is tolerable comfortable; the army are as healthy as can well be expected in general. The General's apartment is very small; he has had a log cabbin built to dine in, which has made our quarter much more tolerable than they were at first."

[2] Richard K. Meade of the General's family.

to meet her. We are in a dreary kind of place, and uncomfortably provided; for other matters I shall refer you to the bearer, Colonel Fitzgerald,[1] who can give you the occurrences of the camp, &c., better than can be related in a letter. My best wishes attend Nelly and the little ones, and with sincere regard I am and shall ever remain, dear Sir, your most affectionate, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 2 February, 1778.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 26th Ulto.

The recent detection of the wicked design you mention, gives me the most sensible pleasure; and I earnestly hope, that you may be alike successful in discovering and disappointing every attempt, which may be projected against you, either by your open or concealed enemies. It is a tax, however, severe, which all those must pay, who are called to eminent stations of trust, not only to be held up as conspicuous marks to the enmity of the public adversaries to their country, but to the malice of secret traitors, and the *envious intrigues* of false friends and factions.[2]

[1] John Fitzgerald, also one of Washington's aides.

[2] The draft contains the following through which the pen has been run:

"It is easy to bear the first, and even the devices of private enemies whose ill will only arises from their common hatred to the cause we are engaged in, are to me tolerable; yet, I confess, I cannot help feeling the most painful sensations, whenever I have reason to believe I am the object of persecution to men, who are embarked in the same general interest, and whose friendship my heart does not reproach me with ever having done any thing to forfeit. But with many, it is a sufficient cause to halt and wish the ruin of a man, because he has been happy enough to be the object of *his country's* favor."

I am obliged to you for the interest you take in the affair of the two Hendricks and Meeker; and I have no doubt that the measures adopted are, considering all things, best.[1] You are pleased to intimate, that you would take pleasure in recommending, at the approaching session of your Assembly, any hints from me respecting the army, by which your State can advance the general interest. I should be happy in offering any such in my power; but, as there is now in camp a committee of Congress to confer with me at large on the measures proper to be adopted in every respect for the benefit of the army, whatever shall be thought necessary to this end will, of course, be communicated to you by Congress. I am, &c.

TO PETER COLT.[2]

[7 February, 1778.]

SIR:

The present situation of the army is the most melancholy that can be conceived. Our supplies of provisions of the flesh kind for some time past have been very deficient and irregular. A prospect now

[1] John and Baker Hendricks and John Meeker had been employed by Col. Dayton in the summer of 1777, under Washington's directions, to procure intelligence from the enemy. They were allowed to carry small quantities of provisions into New York and to bring back a few goods, the better to cover their real designs. Being arrested on a charge of carrying on an illegal correspondence with the enemy, Washington interposed and explained the matter to Govr. Livingston. "You must be well convinced," he wrote, "that it is indispensably necessary to make use of these means to procure intelligence. The persons employed must bear the suspicion of being thought inimical, and it is not in their powers to assert their innocence, because that would get abroad [and] destroy the confidence which the enemy puts in them."—*Washington to Governor Livingston*, January 20, 1778.

[2] Purchasing Commissary in Connecticut.

opens of absolute want, such as will make it impossible to keep the army much longer from dissolution, unless the most vigorous and effectual measures be pursued to prevent it.—Jersey, Pensylvania, and Maryland, are now intirely exhausted. All the Beef and Pork already collected in them, or that can be collected, will not by any means support the army one month longer. Further to the Southward some quantities of salt provisions have been procured; but if they were all on the spot they would afford but a very partial and temporary supply.—The difficulty of transportation is great; the distance will not allow it to be effected by land carriage; and the navigation up Chesapeak bay is interrupted by the enemy's vessels, which makes it very precarious when we shall get any material relief from that quarter. To the Eastward only, can we turn our eyes with any reasonable hope of timely and adequate succor. If every possible exertion is not made use of there, to send us immediate and ample supplies of cattle, with pain I speak the alarming truth, no human efforts can keep the army from speedily disbanding.[1]

I have desired Col. Blaine to give you a just state of our situation, and to send an active man in his

[1] "The occasional deficiences in the Article of provisions, which we have often severely felt, seem now on the point of resolving themselves into this fatal crisis—total want and a dissolution of the Army. Mr. Blaine informs me, in the most decisive terms, that he has not the least prospect of answering the demands of the army, within his district, more than a month longer, at the extremity. The expectations, he has from other quarters, appear to be altogether vague and precarious; and from anything, I can see, we have every reason to apprehend the most ruinous consequences.

"The spirit of desertion among the soldiery never before rose to such a threat-

Department to you to *hurry on* to camp whatever cattle you may be able to purchase. I cannot forbear, so urgent is the necessity of the case, accompanying his representation by a similar one from myself. You are called upon by every motive, that ought to influence you in your official capacity and as a well wisher to the army, to strain every nerve and exert your utmost activity, towards affording us the assistance we indispensably stand in need of, and without a moment's loss of time. I persuade myself you will duly consider the infinite importance of leaving nothing undone that may be in your power; and as I know the State of Connecticut abounds in the article we want, I flatter myself we shall not be left to feel the calamitous consequences with which we are now threatened. * * *

I am informed there are considerable quantities of Salt provisions laid up in New England; as it is inconvenient, tedious and extremely expensive to transport them to this army, I have directed General Putnam, to make use of them almost wholly for the troops under his command, and to let all the cattle that can be procured come on to us; which will be equally conducive to dispatch and economy. As

ening height, as at the present time. The murmurs on account of Provisions are become universal, and what may ensue, if a better prospect does not speedily open, I dread to conjecture. I pretend not to assign the causes of the distress, we experience, in this particular, nor do I wish to throw out the least imputation of blame, upon any person. I only mean to represent our affairs as they are, that necessity may be properly felt, of exerting the utmost care and activity, to prevent the mischiefs; which I cannot forbear anticipating, with inexpressible concern."—*Washington to William Buchanan*, 7 February, 1778.

far as this may Depend upon you, I should wish the rule to be strictly observed. I am, &c.

TO THOMAS NELSON, JR.

VALLEY FORGE, Feby 8, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have been favored with your letters of the 24th of Decemr and 20th ulto. and thank you for the several articles of intelligence contained in them. Although it is devoutly to be wished that soldiers could engage for three years or the war, yet I am persuaded it would not be consistent with good policy to attempt it at this time; consequently, that the plan of drafting for twelve months only is a wise measure. If the States would exert themselves, and Congress would bend their whole force to one point, the most satisfactory and decisive effects might I think result from it. But if they go to frittering their army into detachments, for the accomplishment of some local and less important purposes, the campaign will be wasted, and nothing decisive (on our part) attempted. It is our business to crush, if possible the army under Genl. Howe's immediate command; this once done the branches of it fall of course, and without it the body will always afford nourishment to its members. My fear is, that Virginia, by attempting to do too much will do too little, or in other words by attempting to raise 5000 volunteers (which more than probable will not succeed) the drafts for your regiments will be impeded, and after all unless some vigorous exertions can be

used to supply with provisions, men will avail little, for you can have no conception of our deficiency in this article.

It is with pain and grief I find, by your letter of the 20th ulto, that our countrymen are still averse to innoculation, especially when consequences, so apparently ill must result from it. The artillery and other regiments of infantry I was in hopes of seeing here as soon as the roads and weather should be a little settled, as they will want a little disciplining before the campaign opens to fit them for the purposes of it.

You gave me reason, my dear Sir, to believe, I shall see [you] at camp in the Spring. I should rejoice at it, or to hear of your being in Congress again, as I view with concern the departure of every gentleman of independent spirit from the grand American council.

Nothing of much importance has happened since my last. We have lost a good many men and horses by hard fare in our present quarters, but hope we have seen the worst, especially with respect to the first, as most of the men are now in tolerable good huts. Faction had begun to rear its head, but the heads of it unmasked, I believe, too soon. An expedition is also on foot against (rather into) Canada, which I am well persuaded is the child of folly, and must be productive of capital ills, circumstanced as our affairs are at present. But as it is the first fruit of our new Board of War, I did not incline to say any thing against it. Be so good as to present my

respectful compliments to your lady, uncle and friends, and believe me to be with perfect esteem and regard, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
9 February, 1778.[1]

SIR:

I was duly favored with your Letter of the 23d of last month, to which I should have replied sooner, had I not been delayed by business that required my more immediate attention.

It is my wish to give implicit credit to the assurances of every Gentleman; but in the subject of our present correspondence, I am sorry to confess, there happen to be some unlucky circumstances, which involuntarily compell me to consider the discovery you mention, not so satisfactory and conclusive as you seem to think it.

I am so unhappy as to find no small difficulty in reconciling the spirit and import of your different Letters, and sometimes of the different parts of the same Letter with each other. It is not unreasonable to presume, that your first information of my having notice of General Conway's Letter came from himself; there were very few in the secret and it is natural to suppose, that, he being immediately concerned, would be most interested to convey the intelligence to you. It is also far from improbable that

[1] The first official note from Gates as a member of the Board of War was dated 24 January, 1778. Washington's first letter to Gates as President of the Board of War was dated 26 January, 1778.

he acquainted you with the substance of the passage communicated to me. One would expect this, if he believed it to be spurious, in order to ascertain the imposition and evince his innocence; especially as he seemed to be under some uncertainty, as to the precise contents of what he had written, when I signified my knowledge of the matter to him.—If he neglected doing it, the omission cannot easily be interpreted into any thing else, than a consciousness of the reality of the extract, if not literally, at least substantially. If he did not neglect it, it must appear somewhat strange that the forgery remained so long undetected, and that your first letter to me from Albany of the 8th of December, should tacitly recognize the genuineness of the paragraph in question; while your only concern at that time seemed to be "the tracing out the author of the infidelity, which put extracts from Genl. Conway's Letter into my hands."

Throughout the whole of that letter the reality of the extracts is by the fairest implication allowed and your only solicitude is to find out the person that brought them to light. After making the most earnest pursuit of the author of the supposed treachery, without saying a word about the truth or falsehood of the passage; your Letter of the 23d Ulto. to my great surprise, proclaims it "in words as well as in substance a wicked forgery."

It is not my intention to contradict this assertion but only to intimate some considerations, which tend to induce a supposition, that though none of General

Conway's letters to you contained the offensive passage mentioned, there might have been something in them too nearly related to it, that could give such an extraordinary alarm. It may be said, if this were not the case, how easy in the first instance, to have declared there was nothing exceptionable in them, and to have produced the letters themselves in support of it? This may be thought the most proper and effectual way of refuting misrepresentation and removing all suspicion.—The propriety of the objections suggested against submitting them to inspection, may very well be questioned. "The various reports circulated concerning their contents," were, perhaps, so many arguments for making them speak for themselves, to place the matter upon the footing of certainty. Concealment in an affair which had made so much noise, tho' not by *my* means, will naturally lead men to conjecture the worst; and it will be a subject of speculation, even to candor itself. The anxiety and jealousy you apprehended from revealing the Letter, will be very apt to be increased by suppressing it.

It may be asked, why not submit to inspection a performance perfectly harmless, and, of course, conceived in terms of proper caution and delicacy? Why supposed that "anxiety and jealousy would have arisen in the breasts of very respectable officers, or that they would have been unnecessarily disgusted at being made sensible of their faults, when related with judgement and impartiality by a candid Observer?" Surely they could not have been unreasonable enough to take offence at a performance so

perfectly inoffensive, "blaming actions rather then persons," which have evidently no connexion with one another, and indulgently "recording the errors of inexperience."

You are pleased to consider General Conway's Letters as of a confidential nature; observing that "time and circumstances must point out the propriety or impropriety of communicating such Letters." Permit me to inquire whether, when there is an impropriety in communicating, it is only applicable with respect to the parties, who are the subjects of them:—One might be led to imagine this to be the case from your having admitted others into the secret of your confidential correspondence, at the same time that you thought it ineligible it should be trusted to those "officers, whose actions underwent its scrutiny." Your not knowing whether the Letter, under consideration, "came to me from a Member of Congress, or from an officer," plainly indicates that you originally communicated it to at least one of that honorable body; and I learn from General Conway, that before his late arrival at York Town, it had been committed to the perusal of several of its members, and was afterwards shown by himself to three more. It is somewhat difficult to conceive a reason, founded in generosity, for imparting the free and confidential strictures of that ingenious censor, on the operations of the Army, under my command, to a member of Congress; but perhaps "time and circumstances pointed it out."—It must indeed be acknowledged, that the faults of very respectable

officers, not less injurious for being the result of inexperience, were not improper topics to engage the attention of members of Congress.

It is however greatly to be lamented, that this adept in military science did not employ his abilities in the progress of the campaign, in pointing out those wise measures, which were calculated to give us "that degree of success we might reasonably expect." The United States have lost much from that unseasonable diffidence, which prevented his embracing the numerous opportunities he had in Council, of displaying those rich treasures of knowledge and experience, he has since so freely laid open to you.—I will not do him the injustice to impute the penurious reserve which ever appeared in him upon such occasions to any other cause than an excess of modesty; neither will I suppose he possesses no other merit than of that after kind of sagacity, which qualifies a man better for profound discoveries of errors, that have been committed, and advantages that have been lost, than for the exercise of that foresight and provident discernment which enable him to avoid the one and anticipate the other.—But, willing as I am to subscribe to all his pretensions and to believe that his remarks on the operations of the campaign were very judicious, and that he has sagaciously descanted on many things that might have been done, I can not help being a little sceptical as to his ability, to have found out the means of accomplishing them, or to prove the sufficiency of those in our possession. These minutiæ, I suspect, he did not think worth his

attention, particularly as they might not be within the compass of *his views.*—

Notwithstanding the hopeful presages, you are pleased to figure to yourself of General Conway's firm and constant friendship to America, I cannot persuade myself to retract the prediction concerning him, which you so emphatically wish had not been inserted in my last. A better acquaintance with him, than I have reason to think you have had from what you say, and a concurrence of circumstances, oblige me to give him but little credit for the qualifications of his heart; of which, at least, I beg leave to assume the privilege of being a tolerable judge. Were it necessary, more instances than one might be adduced from his behavior and conversation, to manifest that he is capable of all the malignity of detraction, and all the meanessess of intrigue, to gratify the absurd resentment of disappointed vanity, or to answer the purposes of personal aggrandizement and promote the interests of faction. I am, &c.[1]

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
9 February, 1778.

The good people of the State of Pennsylvania, living in the vicinity of Philadelphia and near the Delaware River, having suf-

[1] "I yesterday received your favor of the 19th inst.

"I am as averse to controversy as any man, and had I not been forced into it, you never would have had occasion to impute to me, even the shadow of disposition towards it. Your repeatedly and solemnly disclaiming any offensive views in those matters, which have been the subject of our past correspondence

fered much by the enemy's carrying off their property, without allowing them *any compensation*, thereby distressing the inhabitants, supplying their own army, and enabling them to protract the cruel and unjust war that they are now waging against these States; and whereas, by recent intelligence, I have reason to expect that they intend making another grand forage into this country; it is of the utmost consequence, that the horses, cattle, sheep, and provender, (within fifteen miles west from the river Delaware, between the Schuylkill and the Brandywine,) be immediately removed to prevent the enemy from receiving any benefit therefrom, as well as to supply the present exigencies of the American army.

I do therefore authorize, empower, and command you forthwith to take, carry off, and secure, all such horses as are suitable for cavalry or for draft, and all cattle and sheep fit for slaughter, together with every kind of forage, for the use of this army, that may be found in the possession of any of the inhabitants within the aforesaid limits, causing certificates to be given to each person for the number, value, and quantity of the horses, sheep, cattle, and provender so taken. Notice will be given to the holders of such certificates by the commissary and quartermaster-general when and where they may apply for payment, that they may not be disappointed in calling for their money.

All officers, civil and military, commissaries and quartermasters, are hereby ordered to obey, aid, and assist you in this necessary business. All the provender on the islands between Philadelphia and Chester, which may be difficult of access, or too hazardous to attempt carrying off, you will immediately cause to be destroyed, giving direction to the officer or officers to whom this duty is assigned, to take an account of the quantity, together with the owners' names as far as the nature of the service will admit. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

makes me willing to close with the desire, you express, of burying them hereafter in silence, and, as far as future wants will permit, oblivion. My temper leads me to peace and harmony with all men; and it is peculiarly my wish to avoid any personal feuds or dissentions with those who are embarked in the same great national interest with myself; as every difference of this kind must in its consequence be very injurious."— *Washington to Major-General Gates*, 24 February, 1778.

[1] After executing these orders, Wayne passed over for a similar purpose into

TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 10 February, 1778.

SIR,

I received yesterday the favor of your letter of the 5th instant.[1] In answer to whatever it contains con-

Jersey, where he was joined by Pulaski with a party of horse. Pulaski was stationed for the winter at Trenton. The British followed Wayne into Jersey, crossing the river in two divisions, one landing at Billingsport, and the other at Gloucester, amounting in all to more than three thousand men, with eight field-pieces. They attempted to surround Wayne in the night at Haddonfield, being in force vastly superior; but he received timely intelligence of their design, and retreated in the evening a few hours previously to the arrival of the enemy. After making a rapid incursion into the country, and collecting forage and cattle, the British returned to Philadelphia; but they were harassed by Wayne and Pulaski while debarking at the ferry, and a smart skirmish ensued. Pulaski exposed himself with his usual bravery. His horse was wounded. On the 14th of March, Wayne recrossed the river with his detachment at Burlington, and proceeded to destroy the forage accessible to the enemy in Philadelphia county and a part of Bucks, and to drive off the horses and cattle. He thus made a circuit quite round the city.—*Wayne's MS. Letters*, March 5th, 14th.

[1] "By advices received from Rhode Island, transmitting to me a copy of a letter from General Heath to Lieut-General Burgoyne, a copy of which is inclosed, I am informed that it is determined to detain General Burgoyne's troops in New England until all demands for their provisions and other necessaries are satisfied, and that this determination is grounded, not only upon a requisition of mine for provisions to be sent in for the subsistence of the prisoners in my possession, and for the purchase of other necessaries, but upon a forgery by my agents, emissaries, and abettors, of what are called continental bills of credit. This last allegation is too illiberal to deserve a serious answer.

"With regard to the other, I know not from what expression, in any of my letters to you, it has been understood, that I made the requisition alluded to. You know that the allowance of provisions to prisoners, from the beginning of my command, has been equal in quantity and quality to what is given to our own troops not on service. If you had thought this insufficient, you might have directed a farther supply from the markets, and were likewise at liberty to send in whatever articles you thought proper from the country. The allowance of fuel has been also regulated, as well as our means would admit, and a similar permission of purchase or supply from you has never been refused. My letter of the 21st of April last explained to you what was afforded to the prisoners; clothing, and some other necessaries, they had a right to expect from those, who had been the occasion of their being exposed to the chance of captivity, and that idea I have ever understood to be mutual. But notwith-

cerning General Burgoyne's army, and the measures adopted relative to it, I have only to inform you, that this is a matter in which I have never had the least direction. It lies wholly with Congress; and the proposals you make on this head must be submitted to them. I have accordingly transmitted a copy of your letter, and shall be ready to forward to you any resolution they may take in consequence.

I shall omit animadverting on your observations with regard to the allowance and treatment to prisoners in your hands. It is a subject, which has been

standing the remonstrances I made to you upon that point, finding that supplies were not sent in, my humanity interposed in behalf of the unfortunate men in our possession; and, on a late representation of their distress, I permitted in this city the purchase of blanketing, and such other necessaries as the severity of the winter require, and without which they must absolutely have perished.

"Confident as I am, that you will acknowledge this to be a just recital of facts, I cannot but think it unnecessary to say any thing farther, either upon the cruelty falsely alleged to have been exercised against the prisoners, or the unjust reflections you have been so often induced to transmit to me upon that head. In consideration, however, of the real and unavoidable distresses of the prisoners on both sides, as well as to put an end to all fruitless altercation on the subject, I shall consent to an immediate exchange of all prisoners now in our possession, as well officers as private men so far as the number of the latter, and parity of the rank of the former, will admit. In the mean time, I shall wait the arrival here of the British officers, whom you have released upon their paroles, and shall, without delay, send an equal number to you in return.

"With regard to the account for provisions and other necessaries, which I find by General Heath's letter is become a pretext for infringing, if it is not intended as an absolute breach of, the convention of Saratoga, I do readily agree to the immediate appointment of commissioners, on your part and on mine, to settle that account, together with all other accounts for provisions, &c. furnished the prisoners on either side, and to make payment of the balance. As I have no objection to the earliest meeting of the commissioners for completing the exchange and liquidating the accounts, I trust there will be no new impediment to the release of General Burgoyne's troops, but that you will give immediately such orders for their embarkation upon the arrival of the transports at Boston, as will remove every difficulty."—*Howe to Washington*, 5 February, 1778.

fully discussed in the progress of our correspondence; and the necessity of a further investigation is superseded, by your now meeting me on the ground I have so long wished. The powers under which I act are entirely derived from Congress, and must of course be subject to such modifications, as they may think proper according to circumstances to prescribe. But, holding myself fully authorized, by their instructions and intentions, to avail myself of the reasonable terms, you are at this time willing to adopt for the mutual relief of prisoners, I shall explicitly close with your propositions to the following effect;—"That an exchange of all prisoners now in our possession, officer for officer, soldier for soldier, and citizen for citizen, so far as number and rank will apply," be carried into execution, as expeditiously as the nature of the case will admit, and without regard to any controverted point, which might prove an impediment to so desirable an end. And here, as I may not clearly understand your meaning, when you say,—"In the mean time I shall wait the arrival of the British officers, whom you have released upon their paroles, and shall without delay send an equal number to you in return,"—I take occasion to request, that you will be pleased to favor me with an explanation; whether you intend to consider such officers, on both sides, as still continuing under the obligation of a parole, or as absolutely exchanged in pursuance of the general cartel.[1] I see no reason why an effectual

[1] Howe replied that the exchange of commissioned officers must be governed by the release of the Hessian field-officers taken at Trenton, and Lieutenant-

exchange should not at once operate with respect to them.

I also agree, that two commissioners from me shall meet a like number from you, on the 10th day of March in Germantown, at the King of Prussia Tavern, at eleven in the forenoon, to adjust upon equitable terms the difference you mention, and such other matters as they may be severally empowered to determine.

With respect to a general settlement of accounts, as it comprehends points with which I have no authority to interfere, it is not in my power to concur in the measure you suggest for that purpose. I am under the necessity of referring it to the decision of Congress. Considering a general exchange as finally agreed on between us, I shall without delay order the prisoners in our hands to places in the vicinity of your different posts, as their respective situations may render most convenient; and shall give you notice as they arrive, that you may return a number equal to those sent in from time to time. I am, with due respect, Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENE

DEAR SIR,

The Congress, s
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VALLEY FORGE,
, 1778.

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of the losses of Fort Mifflin upon the Delaware, and Fort Montgomery upon Hudsons river. The peculiar situation of the army has hindered me from attending to this matter before this time. As most of the principal officers up the North River were immediately concerned in the defence of Fort Montgomery, or eventually so by being very near it, there cannot in my opinion be a sufficient number proper to compose a Court found upon the spot. It is therefore my intention to send three at least from this Army, and it is my wish that you should be one and act as president upon the occasion, if your health will permit you to attend. I shall therefore be glad to hear from you upon the subject, that, I may either proceed to fill up the commission for you, or appoint another, if your health should not be sufficiently established to go thro' the Business. It is my wish to have this inquiry carried on, not only in obedience to the Resolve of Congress, but for other reasons, which I need not explain to you. It is besides impatiently expected by the Gentlemen in the State of New York, who are in hopes that some beneficial consequences will result from it. You are particularly well acquainted with many circumstances relating to the situation of matters in that quarter and therefore more capable of conducting the enquiry than any other officer. I shall only add one reason more to induce you to strain a point upon this occasion, which is, that the scarcity of General Officers is already so great, that, supposing one as proper as yourself, I could not spare him without injury to the

service. I shall expect an answer by return of the express.[1] I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 14 February, 1778.

SIR,

I am favored with yours of the 9th instant, enclosing the proceedings of a general court-martial held by your order. It is a defect in our martial law, from which we often find great inconvenience, that the power of appointing general courts-martial is too limited. I do not find it can be legally exercised by any officer, except the Commander-in-chief, or the commanding general in any particular State. This circumstance would make it improper for me to ratify the sentence against Murray, did the nature of his crime require it; and, if it was thought inexpedient to let him pass unpunished, I should be under the necessity of ordering another court for his trial. But as there are some mitigating considerations, which you mention, it may perhaps be as well to remit the present sentence, without proceeding any further in the affair. I leave it to your judgment, either with my approbation to do this, or to make use of the enclosed order, to bring the offender to a second trial.

[1] "With respect to Fort Mifflin, the inquiry involves very extensive considerations, and more or less affects almost all the General Officers in this army, whose advice or concurrence in the measures taken, make them in some degree parties. The mode in my opinion most unexceptionable to be pursued is for Congress to authorise a Committee of their own body, or to delegate any other persons they may chuse to intrust, not connected with the operations of this army, to go into the business."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 8 February, 1778.

Had the constitution of the court been entirely regular, I do not conceive I could with propriety alter the capital punishment into a corporal one. The right of mitigating only extends, in my opinion, to lessening the degree of punishment, in the same species prescribed; and does not imply any authority to change the nature or quality of it altogether. I am, sir, &c.[1]

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

VALLEY FORGE, 14 February, 1778.

SIR

I do myself the honor of transmitting you a Letter from the Committee of Congress, now here. These gentlemen have represented the distress of the Army for want of provision so fully and in so just a light, that I shall forbear to trouble you with further observations upon the subject.—I shall only observe,

[1] "You mention some scruples, as to the operation of our articles of war, with regard to intentional, or attempted desertion, cases of mere intuition, unexpressed in any act, notwithstanding the confession of the criminals, I do not conceive, to fall within the meaning of that article, which particularly relates to desertion, or to be susceptible of capital punishment; but where intention and any acts, expressive of it, correspond, I think there can be no doubt of the propriety of construing it into desertion, and inflicting the sentence of the law. When a man is found at an improper distance from the camp, or in circumstances that indicate an attempt to desert, he is certainly to be considered and treated as a deserter. If not, the attempt, or nothing but the full execution of his design, were to be deemed desertion, the crime would never, or very rarely be ascertained; for, in order to that, it would be necessary the soldier should have been actually with the enemy and afterwards recovered. When difficulties occur, the spirit rather than the letter of the law is to be consulted, and this appears clearly to be intended by that part of the oath prescribed to Courts Martial, which declares, 'that when any doubt shall arise which is not explained by the articles, the court is to determine, according to conscience, the best of their understanding, and the custom of war in like cases.'"—*Washington to General Smallwood*, 21 February, 1778.

that if the picture they have drawn is imperfect it is because the colourings are not sufficiently strong; it does not exceed our real situation. From your real and earnest wishes to promote the service, I am firmly convinced we shall have every relief in your power to give. I should have troubled you before on this interesting and alarming business—had I not supposed Congress the proper Body to have been informed, and that the means of relief should be under their direction.

Not to mention our distresses the last campaign and that we were supplied from hand to mouth and frequently not at all, from the day Mr. Trumbull left Commissary department, this is the second time in the course of the present year, that we have been on the point of a dissolution; and I know not whether the melancholy event may not take place.

The subject of Horses too is so fully explained by the Committee that it is needless for me to enlarge on that head. The advantages derived from a respectable cavalry will strike you at once, and I have the most entire confidence that you will with pleasure afford any aid in your Power to promote our views in this instance. I have &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

VALLEY FORGE, 15 February, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 2d ultimo, from Chantilly, enclosing Lieutenant-Colonel Frazer's orders for the

management of the grenadiers and light-infantry in an action, and upon a march, came to my hands in the course of last month, and merits my thanks, as it may be of use to such corps, one of which, consisting of light-infantry, we are now forming. The enemy are governed by no principles that ought to actuate honest men; no wonder then, that forgery should be amongst their other crimes. I have seen a letter published in a handbill at New York, and extracts from it republished in a Philadelphia paper, said to be from me to Mrs. Washington, not one word of which did I ever write. Those contained in the pamphlet you speak of are, I presume, equally genuine, and perhaps written by the same author.[1] I

[1] "The arts of the enemies of America are endless, but all wicked as they are various. Among other tricks, they have forged a pamphlet of letters, entitled 'Letters from General Washington to Several of his Friends, in 1776.' The design of the forger is evident, and no doubt it gained him a good beefsteak from his masters. I would send you this pamphlet, if it were not too bulky for the post, as it might serve to amuse your leisure hours during the inaction of winter."—*Richard Henry Lee to Washington*, 2 January, 1778. The letters referred to are those printed as spurious in Vol. IV. of this collection.

"Since my last to you about the end of January, I have been favored with your letter of the 12th of that month, which did not reach my hands till within these few days. The question there put was, in some degree, solved in my last. But to be more explicit, I can assure you, that no person ever heard me drop an expression that had a tendency to resignation. The same principles, that led me to embark in the opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain, operate with additional force at this day; nor is it my desire to withdraw my services, while they are considered of importance in the present contest; but to report a design of this kind is among the arts, which those, who are endeavoring to effect a change, are practising to bring it to pass. I have said, and I still do say, that there is not an officer in the service of the United States, that would return to the sweets of domestic life with more heartfelt joy than I should. But I would have this declaration accompanied by these sentiments, that, while the public are satisfied with my endeavours, I mean not to shrink from the cause. But the

should be glad, however, to see and examine the texture of them, if a favorable opportunity to send them should present.

Lord Cornwallis has certainly embarked for England, but with what view is not so easy to determine. He was eyewitness a few days before his departure to a scene, not a little disgraceful to the pride of British valor, in their manœuvre to Chesnut Hill, and precipitate return, after boasting their intentions of driving us beyond the mountains.

I am very glad to find, that the Assembly of Virginia have taken matters up so spiritedly; but wish, instead of attempting to raise so many volunteers, they had resolved at all adventures to complete their regiments by drafting. If all the States would do this, and fall upon ways and means to supply their troops with comfortable clothing upon moderate terms, and Congress would make the commissions of officers of some value to them, every thing would probably go well, making at the same time some reform in the different departments of the army; nothing standing in greater need of it, than the quartermasters and commissaries, as no army ever suffered more by their neglect; the consequences of this neglect are much to be dreaded.

I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

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moment her voice, not that of faction, calls upon me to resign, I shall do it with as much pleasure as ever the weary traveller retired to rest. This, my dear Doctor, you are at liberty to assert; but, in doing it, I would have nothing formal. All things will come right again, and soon recover their proper tone, as the design is not only seen through, but reprobated."—*Washington to Rev. Dr. Gordon*, 15 February, 1778.

TO GOVERNOR GEORGE CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS VALLEY FORGE,
16 February, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

It is with great reluctance I trouble you on a subject, which does not properly fall within your province; but it is a subject that occasions me more distress, than I have felt since the commencement of the war; and which loudly demands the most zealous exertions of every person of weight and authority, who is interested in the success of our affairs; I mean the present dreadful situation of the army for want of provisions, and the miserable prospects before us with respect to futurity. It is more alarming, than you will probably conceive; for, to form a just idea, it were necessary to be on the spot. For some days past, there has been little less than a famine in camp. A part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been ere this excited by their suffering to a general mutiny and dispersion. Strong symptoms, however, of discontent have appeared in particular instances; and nothing but the most active efforts everywhere can long avert so shocking a catastrophe.

Our present sufferings are not all. There is no foundation laid for any adequate relief hereafter. All the magazines provided in the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, and

all the immediate additional supplies they seem capable of affording, will not be sufficient to support the army more than a month longer, if so long. Very little has been done to the eastward, and as little to the southward; and whatever we have a right to expect from those quarters must necessarily be very remote, and is, indeed, more precarious than could be wished. When the fore-mentioned supplies are exhausted, what a terrible crisis must ensue, unless all the energy of the continent shall be exerted to provide a timely remedy!

Impressed with this idea, I am, on my part, putting every engine at work, that I can possibly think of, to prevent the fatal consequences, we have so great reason to apprehend. I am calling upon all those, whose stations and influence enable them to contribute their aid upon so important an occasion; and, from your well known zeal, I expect every thing within the compass of your power, and that the abilities and resources of the State over which you preside will admit. I am sensible of the disadvantages it labors under, from having been so long the scene of war, and that it must be exceedingly drained by the great demands to which it has been subject. But, though you may not be able to contribute materially to our relief, you can perhaps do something towards it; and any assistance, however trifling in itself, will be of great moment at so critical a juncture, and will conduce to the keeping of the army together, till the commissary's department can be put upon a better footing, and effectual measures

concerted to secure a permanent and competent supply. What methods you can take, you will be the best judge of; but, if you can devise any means to procure a quantity of cattle, or other kind of flesh, for the use of this army, to be at camp in the course of a month, you will render a most essential service to the common cause. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] The following extract from a letter written in camp by General Varnum, as brigadier of the day, to General Greene, not only presents a vivid picture of the distresses of the army, but shows the difficulties with which the Commander-in-chief had to contend, as well in witnessing the scenes of suffering among the soldiers, as in controlling the discontent and opposing opinions of his officers.

"The situation of the camp is such," says General Varnum, "that in all human probability the army must soon dissolve. Many of the troops are destitute of meat, and are several days in arrear. The horses are dying for want of forage. The country in the vicinity of the camp is exhausted. There cannot be a moral certainty of bettering our circumstances, while we continue here. What consequences have we rationally to expect? Our desertions are astonishingly great; the love of freedom, which once animated the breasts of those born in the country, is controlled by hunger, the keenest of necessities. If we consider the relation in which we stand to the troops, we cannot reconcile their sufferings to the sentiments of honest men. No political consideration can justify the measure. There is no local object of so much moment, as to conceal the obligations which bind us to them. Should a blind attachment to a preconcerted plan fatally disaffect, and in the end force the army to mutiny, then will the same country, which now applauds our hermitage [Valley Forge], curse our insensibility.

"I have from the beginning viewed this situation with horror! It is unparalleled in the history of mankind to establish winter-quarters in a country wasted and without a single magazine. We now only feel some of the effects, which reason from the beginning taught us to expect as inevitable. My freedom upon this occasion may be offensive; if so, I should be unhappy, but duty obliges me to speak without reserve. My own conscience will approve the deed, when some may perhaps look back with regret to the time, when the evil in extreme might have been prevented. There is no alternative, but immediately to remove the army to places where they can be supplied, unless effectual remedies can be applied on the spot, which I believe every gentleman of the army thinks impracticable."—*MS. Letter*, February 12th.

"I have more than once mentioned to you that we have been obliged to renounce the most important enterprises, delay the most critical marches, by the

AN ADDRESS TO THE INHABITANTS OF NEW JERSEY, PENNSYLVANIA, DELAWARE, MARYLAND, AND VIRGINIA.[1]

VALLEY FORGE, 18 February, 1778.

Friends, Countrymen, and Fellow Citizens,

After three campaigns, during which the brave subjects of these States have contended, not unsuccessfully, with one of the most powerful kingdoms upon earth, we now find ourselves at least upon a level with our opponents; and there is the best reason to believe, that efforts adequate to the abilities of this country would enable us speedily to conclude the war, and to secure the invaluable blessings of peace, liberty, and safety. With this view, it is in contemplation, at the opening of the next campaign, to assemble a force sufficient, not barely to cover the country from a repetition of those depredations which it hath already suffered, but also to operate offensively, and to strike some decisive blow.

In the prosecution of this object, it is to be feared that so large an army may suffer for the want of provisions. The distance between this and the eastern States, whence considerable supplies of flesh have been hitherto drawn, will necessarily render those supplies extremely precarious. And unless the virtuous yeomanry of the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Vir-

delinquency of commissaries. Here of late it has reduced us almost to the point of disbanding. The head of the department is a stationary attendant on Congress; what he might do, if he had views sufficiently extensive, by a proper employment of agents, I know not; but as the case is at present, he seems to be almost useless. I have heard it asserted by more than one sensible, disinterested man, that the removal of Mr. Trumbull from that office has been the source of all our misfortunes. . . . Certain it is that the want of providence, or want of ability in the present managers, has brought us to the brink of ruin. By extraordinary exertions, by scraping from distant scanty magazines and collecting with parties, we have obtained a temporary relief; and have hopes that the representation of our late distress to several persons of influence and authority in different states, will procure us such farther supplies as will save us from the disagreeable necessity of dividing the army into cantonments."—*John Laurens to his father*, 17 February, 1778.

[1] The draft of this address is in the *MS.* of Gouverneur Morris.

ginia will exert themselves to prepare cattle for the use of the army, during the months of May, June, and July next, great difficulties may arise in the course of the campaign. It is therefore recommended to the inhabitants of those States, to put up and feed immediately as many of their stock cattle as they can spare, so as that they may be driven to this army within that period. A bountiful price will be given, and the proprietors may assure themselves, that they will render a most essential service to the illustrious cause of their country, and contribute in a great degree to shorten this bloody contest. But should there be any so insensible to the common interest, as not to exert themselves upon these generous principles, the private interest of those, whose situation makes them liable to become immediate subjects to the enemy's incursions, should prompt them at least to a measure, which is calculated to save their property from plunder, their families from insult, and their own persons from abuse, hopeless confinement, or perhaps a violent death.

TO WILLIAM DUER.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
21 Feby, 1778.

SIR,

I am favored with yours of the 16th instant, communicating the intelligence you had received respecting the scheme of investing this camp and cutting off its supplies. Your being unacquainted with our present position and the circumstance you mention of an intimation from General Sinclair of the possibility of such an event, very naturally occasioned Biddle's insinuation to make the impression it did on your mind. But it is a project which appears to me totally impracticable with the enemy's present force, or even with one much greater; and I believe the

experiment will hardly be made. The extensive line or rather circle they must occupy, to keep up the communication from post to post, necessary to intercept our intercourse with the country, would be very little able to defend themselves at any given point, and would expose them to ruin in case of an attack from us. I am inclined to believe you must be under some misapprehension, with respect to General Sinclair's observation; and that he alluded to something else than an investiture. I am &c.

P. S. We have one bridge nearly completed. Defects in the Quarter Master's department have delayed it hitherto.[1]

[1] "I am exceedingly sorry to hear that a difference between the officers and men of the Continental troops and those of the militia should damp the exertions of the latter. It has been my constant endeavor since I had the honor to command the forces of the United States to prevent all animosities and jealousies between the troops of different States, whether regular or militia, by exercising the most impartial line of conduct towards all. I very well know that except there is a mutual confidence and good understanding between all the component parts of an army, that the service must be manifestly injured, and therefore you may depend that I will take particular care, when the army takes the field in the spring, and when we shall more than probable be obliged to call upon the Militia to act in conjunction with us, to endeavor to remove the causes of complaint. I hope the unhappy dispute that arose at the Sign of the Compass between a few officers of the Continental army and the Militia, will rather be looked upon as an accidental matter, than the effect of a general and fixed hatred between those two bodies of men imbarked in the same cause, and who ought to afford a mutual support to each other and to turn their arms against the common enemy rather than upon one another. I do hope that all prejudice upon the part of the country may be laid aside upon this occasion, and the most impartial enquiry made into this matter."—*Washington to Governor Wharton*, 23 February, 1778.

A *MS.* in Washington's writing contains some "Remarks" on a paper presented by Col. Bland in November, 1777. These remarks are of no little interest when viewed in the light of subsequent events:

"To abolish colonial distinctions, however desirable it may be, is next to impossible. Great pains in the early part of this war was used, in vain, to do

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
27 February, 1778.

SIR,

I am now to acknowledge the honor of your several favors of the 18th, 19th, and 21st Instant, which with their respective Inclosures have been duly received.

In compliance with the resolution of Congress of the 5th instant, transmitted in your letter of the 7th, I was about to take measures for appointing a court-martial and bringing on the trials which they direct. But, on recurring to the papers you were pleased to send me, I do not find that the committee have made any particular charges against the officers, who are to be the subjects of trial. It was probably the intention of Congress, that these charges should be laid by me. But, as I might err in doing it, and not fully correspond with their views in the matter, especially as it would require considerable time and thought to make myself sufficiently acquainted with it from the papers collected, I should think it would be most ad-

this; but even in the New England States, where the sentiments and customs of the people have an exact similarity, it was found impracticable.

"The new modelling of the army, and reducing supernumerary officers is a very desirable matter, and ought, if possible, to take place; but quære, would not such a total change in our military system, as is proposed, occasion too great a convulsion? Would not the number of rejected officers promote discontent and disorder among the common soldiery? Nay, even mutiny and desertion.

"The allowance of Land to the disbanded officers may be proper enough—but will not half pay be attended with enormous expence? and would not this, and allowing half pay to the officers of reduced regiments at the end of the war, add such weight to a debt already, and probably will be, of such magnitude, as to sink the colonies under the load of it; and give a great disgust to the people at large?"

visable for Congress to state explictly the charges they wish to have exhibited against the officers respectively; and then the business may be proceeded on with propriety.

Besides the above reasons, which operate generally against my exhibiting the charges, in the particular instance of General Schuyler it is impossible for me to do it, as I do not know what instructions he had received from Congress from time to time as to the objects of his command, nor precisely what these were. These appear to me necessary to be known, and essential to carrying on a prosecution against him. When Congress shall have arranged these points, and are pleased to honor me with them, I will pursue the speediest measures to bring on the trials. The sooner this can be done, the better, as some of the parties are extremely anxious, and strongly importune it.[1]

Baron Steuben has arrived at camp. He appears to be much of a gentleman, and, as far as I have had an opportunity of judging, a man of military knowledge, and acquainted with the world.[2]

[1] "*Ordered*, that so much of General Washington's letter of February the 27th as relates to the court-martial on the officers in the northern department, be referred to a committee of four." Ellery, James Smith, Dyer, and Lovell composed the committee.—*Journals of Congress*, 6 March, 1778.

[2] Congress had conferred on Steuben the rank of captain, "granted by a brevet commission at the Baron's special instance, in order to guard against inconveniences which might attend him, if he should without any commission in his pocket be made a prisoner. Upon the arrival of this illustrious stranger at York Town, Congress ordered a committee consisting of Mr. Witherspoon, Mr. McKean, Mr. F. L. Lee and Mr. Henry to wait upon and confer with him, to pay the necessary compliments on his appearance in America and to learn explicitly his expectations from Congress, and the committee were directed

The enclosed extract of a letter from General Putnam will show how great the distresses are in that quarter for want of money. He has described their necessities so fully, that it is unnecessary for me to add upon the subject. I shall only observe, that his account is more than justified by many other letters, and that I am persuaded the earliest possible supply will be forwarded, and that the very important and interesting works carrying on there may not be the least retarded.[1]

I am under some embarrassments respecting the thirteenth Virginia regiment. It was raised on the west side of the Allegany and towards Pittsburg, with assurances from the officers, it is said, that the men would not be drawn from that quarter. This circumstance, added to the disturbances by the Indians, and the exposed situation of their families, has been the

to deliver me the substance of their conference in writing."—*Laurens to Washington*, 19 February, 1778. The conference report was: "The Baron Steuben, who was a lieutenant-general and aid-de-camp to the King of Prussia, desires no rank; is willing to attend General Washington, and be subject to his orders; does not require or desire any command of a particular corps or division, but will serve occasionally as directed by the general; expects to be of use in planning encampments, &c., and promoting the discipline of the army. He heard, before he left France of the dissatisfaction of the Americans with the promotion of foreign officers, therefore makes no terms, nor will accept of any thing but with general approbation and particularly that of General Washington."

[1] "I wish a supply of money to be sent as soon as possible. Our distresses for want of it are not easily to be described. What Mr. Palfrey brought with him was not sufficient to pay the troops *for November by* 250 or 300,000 dollars. The demands were immense, most of the eastern troops having had four or five months' pay due 'em and some more. The army now in general has *three months' pay in arrear*, exclusive of the month's extra pay, and besides this the Quarter Master is pressing for large drafts for the purposes of his Department, though he has received a large proportion of the money which came with Mr. Palfrey."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 3 February, 1778.

cause of great desertions, and is at present the source of much uneasiness, and the more so, as part of the regiment was never marched from thence. I think the whole should be united either here or there, and wish Congress to direct me upon the subject. At the same time that their case, if truly represented, seems to be hard, and to merit the indulgence they claim, I would observe, that the twelfth regiment from the western parts of the same State, and the eighth and twelfth Pennsylvania from the frontier counties of this, have similar pretensions, and might become uneasy, and apply for a like indulgence.

Agreeable to the directions of Congress, I shall send a major-general to Rhode Island, though the number of officers here of this rank, from one cause and another, is greatly reduced, and more so than it ought to be in point of policy.[1] Our loss of matrosses

[1] "However inconvenient and distressing to the service in this quarter it may prove, to part with another Major General, yet, in obedience to a resolve of Congress, I must do it, if neither General Putnam nor Heath in the Judgment of the Committee will answer the purposes of the command at Rhode Island.

"The Committee best know the designs of Congress in assembling a body of Troops in that State; consequently, what kind of an officer (under our present circumstances) may be made to answer. They also know, with more certainty than I do, what will be the determination of Congress respecting General Putnam; and of course, whether the appointing of him to such a command as that at Rhode Island would fall in with their views; it being incumbent on me to observe, that with such materials as I am furnished, the work must go on (whether well or ill is another matter). If therefore he, and others, are not laid aside, they must be placed where they can least injure the service. Generals Arnold and Lincoln will not, by Doctor Brown's account (just from Albany), be able to take the field till June."—*Washington to the Committee of Congress*, 6 March, 1778.

On March 10th Washington appointed Major-General Sullivan to this command, saying: "Congress have not communicated any thing to me on the subject of instructions. If they have any new object, which will occasion an alteration in those given to your predecessor, it is probable that they will make you particularly acquainted with their views."

the last campaign, in killed and wounded, was considerable; and it has not been a little increased this winter by desertions from Colonel Procter's corps. From these circumstances, we are very weak in this line; and I request that Congress will be pleased to order Colonel Harrison's regiment of artillery to march from Virginia as early as the roads will admit, and join this army. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO BRYAN FAIRFAX.[2]

VALLEY FORGE, 1 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 8th of December came safe to my hands, after a considerable delay on its passage. The sentiments you have expressed to me in this

[1] Read in Congress, March 5th.

[2] An early and intimate friendship subsisted between Washington and Bryan Fairfax, which does not appear to have been at any period of their lives interrupted, although they differed widely in their political sentiments. Mr. Fairfax, differing from the majority of his countrymen and from his friends, thought it his duty to go to England and remain there during the contest. With this aim he repaired to New York, having obtained a passport from the Commander-in-chief. But when he arrived there, he was diverted from his purpose by having certain oaths prescribed to him, which his conscience would not allow him to take, being afraid they might prevent him from ever again seeing his wife and children. This hesitancy excited a prejudice against him, which he thought unreasonable, and he obtained permission from the British commander to return to his family. On his journey he again visited General Washington, and was received by him with so much kindness, and such marked civilities, that he wrote him a letter of acknowledgments and thanks soon after he reached Virginia, to which the above is a reply. In that letter he said:

"There are times when favors conferred make a greater impression than at others, for, though I have received many, I hope I have not been unmindful of them; yet that, at a time your popularity was at the highest and mine at the lowest, and when it is so common for men's resentments to run high against those, who differ from them in opinion, you should act with your wonted kindness towards me, has affected me more than any favor I have received; and could not be believed by some in New York, it being above the run of common minds."—*Sparks.*

letter are highly flattering, meriting my warmest acknowledgments, as I have too good an opinion of your sincerity and candor to believe that you are capable of unmeaning professions, and speaking a language foreign to your heart. The friendship, which I ever professed and felt for you, met with no diminution from the difference in our political sentiments. I know the rectitude of my own intentions, and, believing in the sincerity of yours, lamented, though I did not condemn, your renunciation of the creed I had adopted. Nor do I think any person or power ought to do it, whilst your conduct is not opposed to the general interest of the people, and the measures they are pursuing; the latter, that is, our actions, depending upon ourselves, may be controlled, while the powers of thinking, originating in higher causes, cannot always be moulded to our wishes.

The determinations of Providence are always wise, often inscrutable; and, though its decrees appear to bear hard upon us at times, is nevertheless meant for gracious purposes. In this light I cannot help viewing your late disappointment; for if you had been permitted to have gone to England, unrestrained even by the rigid oaths, which are administered on those occasions, your feelings as a husband, parent &c, must have been considerably wounded in the prospect of a long, perhaps lasting, separation from your nearest relatives. What then must they have been, if the obligation of an oath had left you without a will? Your hope of being instrumental in restoring peace would prove as unsubstantial, as mist

before the noon-day's sun, and would as soon dispel; for, believe me, Sir, Great Britain understood herself perfectly well in this dispute, but did not comprehend America. She meant, as Lord Camden, in his late speech in Parliament, clearly and explicitly declared, to drive America into rebellion, that her own purposes might be more fully answered by it; but take this along with it, that this plan originated in a firm belief, founded on misinformation, that no effectual opposition would or could be made. They little dreamt of what has happened, and are disappointed in their views.[1]

Does not every act of Administration, from the Tea Act to the present session of Parliament, declare this in plain and self-evident characters? Had the commissioners any power to treat with America? If they meant peace, would Lord Howe have been detained in England five months after passing the

[1] The allusion here is to Lord Camden's remarks, in the debate respecting the reply to the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament, November 18, 1777. The debate turned on American affairs, the causes of the dispute, and the mode in which the war had been conducted. Lord Camden, referring to some of the preliminary steps in the contest, said: "The people of America showed great dissatisfaction, but that did not fully answer the intentions of government. It was not dissatisfaction, but rebellion, that was sought; dissatisfaction might furnish a pretence for adding to the intolerable oppressions, that those people had for a series of years groaned under; but nothing short of something in the shape of rebellion, or nearly approaching to it, could create a decent apology for slaughter, conquest, and unconditional submission." Again, in regard to the address declaring Massachusetts Bay to be in rebellion, Lord Camden continued: "But all this did not do; the New Englanders were resolved not to verify the address; they were determined not to be rebels; but only to prepare, should the worst happen, to be in a situation to defend themselves. Something more was still wanting, and that was obtained. Our troops were ordered to act effectively; and self-defence was styled actual and declared rebellion."—Almon's *Parliamentary Register*, vol. x., pp. 30, 31.

act? Would the powers of these commissioners have been confined to mere acts of grace, upon condition of absolute submission? No! surely, no! They meant to drive us into what they termed rebellion, that they might be furnished with a pretext to disarm, and then strip us of the rights and privileges of Englishmen and citizens.

If they were actuated by the principles of justice, why did they refuse indignantly to accede to the terms, which were humbly supplicated before hostilities commenced, and this country deluged in blood; and now make their principal officers, and even the commissioners themselves, say that these terms are just and reasonable; nay, that more will be granted, than we have yet asked, if we will relinquish our claim to independency? What name does such conduct as this deserve? And what punishment is there in store for the men, who have distressed millions, involved thousands in ruin, and plunged numberless families in inextricable woe? Could that, which is just and reasonable now, have been unjust four years ago? If not, upon what principles, I say, does Administration act? They must either be wantonly wicked and cruel, or (which is only another mode of describing the same thing) under false colors are now endeavoring to deceive the great body of the people, by industriously propagating a belief, that Great Britain is willing to offer any, and that we will accept of no terms; thereby hoping to poison and disaffect the minds of those, who wish for peace, and create feuds and dissensions among ourselves. In a word, having

less dependence now in their arms than their arts, they are practising such low and dirty tricks, that men of sentiment and honor must blush at their villainy. Among other manœuvres in this way, they are counterfeiting letters, and publishing them as intercepted ones of mine, to prove that I am an enemy to the present measures, and have been led into them step by step, still hoping that Congress would recede from their present claims. I am, dear Sir, your most obedient and affectionate, &c.[1]

[1] "The Commander in Chief again takes occasion to return his warmest thanks to the virtuous officers and soldiery of this army, for that persevering fidelity and zeal which they have uniformly manifested in all their conduct. Their fortitude, not only under the common hardships incident to a military life, but also under the additional sufferings to which the peculiar situation of these States has exposed them, clearly proves them worthy of the enviable privilege of contending for the rights of human nature, the freedom and independence of their country. The recent instance of uncomplaining patience during the scarcity of provisions in Camp, is a fresh proof that they possess in an eminent degree the spirit of soldiers and the magnanimity of patriots. The few refractory individuals who disgrace themselves by murmurs, it is to be hoped have repented such unmanly behavior, and resolved to emulate the noble example of their associates upon every trial which the customary casualties of war may hereafter throw in their way. Occasional distress for want of provisions and other necessaries, is a spectacle that frequently occurs in every army, and perhaps there never was one which has been in general so plentifully supplied in respect to the former as ours. Surely we who are free citizens in arms, engaged in a struggle for everything valuable in society, and partaking in the glorious task of laying the foundation of an empire should scorn effeminately to shrink under those accidents and rigors of war which mercenary hirelings, fighting in the cause of lawless ambition, rapine and devastation, encounter with cheerfulness and alacrity. We should not merely be equal, we should be superior to them in every qualification that dignifies the man or the soldier, in proportion as the motives from which we act and the final hopes of our toils are superior to theirs. Thank Heaven, our country abounds with provisions and with prudent management, we need not apprehend want for any length of time. Defects in the commissary's department, contingencies of weather, and other temporary impediments, have subjected, and may again subject us to a deficiency for a few days, but soldiers, American soldiers, will despise the means

TO THOMAS WHARTON, PRESIDENT OF PENNSYLVANIA.

VALLEY FORGE, 7 March, 1778.

SIR,

There is nothing I have more at heart, than to discharge the great duties incumbent on me with the strictest attention to the ease and convenience of the people. Every instance, therefore, of hardship or oppression, exercised by the officers of any department under my immediate control, gives me the most sensible concern, and should be immediately punished, if complaints were properly made and supported. That there has been some foundation for such complaints, and that they have affected the service, I cannot doubt, from the great delay and backwardness of the people in forwarding supplies and affording the means of transportation. Until the late wagon law of this State was passed, there being no means of procuring the service of the inhabitants but by military compulsion, quartermasters and commissaries, from the necessity of the case, seem to have been justified in impressing, though in many instances, perhaps, it has been done with circumstances of terror and hardship, which they ought to have avoided. But, when the

of repining at such trifling strokes of adversity, trifling indeed when compared with the transcendent prize which will undoubtedly crown their patience and perseverance—Glory and freedom, peace and plenty to themselves and the community, the admiration of the world, the love of their country and the gratitude of posterity. Your general unceasingly employs his tho'ts on the means of relieving your distresses, supplying your wants, and bringing your labors to a speedy and prosperous issue. Our parent country, he hopes, will second his endeavors by the most vigorous exertions, and he is convinced the faithful officers and soldiers associated with him in the great work of rescuing our country from bondage and misery, will continue in the display of that patriotic zeal which is capable of smoothing every difficulty and vanquishing every obstacle." —*Orderly Book*, 1 March, 1778.

legislature had by law made an arrangement, and put this important service under the care of their own officers, it was my full determination, by every means in my power, to support the law that had passed, and avail myself of the resources of the State in the mode pointed out, under a full confidence, that the wisdom and forecast, which had marked out such a plan, would be accompanied with proportionate zeal and efficacy to carry it into execution.

Perhaps, Sir, I am not sufficiently informed, to judge properly where the present defect lays, and therefore avoid imputing blame to any; but I would wish you, and the gentlemen in authority with you, to be assured, that nothing would give me more satisfaction, than to see the powers of the government so effectual for the supply and accommodation of the army, as to take away not only the necessity but even pretence of using any other than the ordinary civil authority. Give me leave further to remark, that the army seems to have a peculiar claim to the exertions of the gentlemen of this State, to make its present situation as convenient as possible; as it was greatly owing to their apprehensions and anxieties, expressed in a memorial to Congress, that the present position was had, where with unparalleled patience they have gone through a severe and inclement winter, unprovided with any of those conveniences and comforts, which are usually the soldier's lot after the dutys of the field are over. * * *

The necessities of the service, Sir, are great; the duty required, I acknowledge, is burthensome and

difficult at this inclement season; but it cannot be dispensed with. The army and the country have a mutual dependence upon each other; and it is of the last importance, that their several duties should be so regulated and enforced, as to produce, not only the greatest harmony and good understanding, but the truest happiness and comfort to each. Depending, therefore, upon a due and early attention to this important business, and promising myself no small relief from our present difficulties, I remain, Sir, with due respect and regard, yours, &c. * * *

TO COLONEL GEORGE BAYLOR.

INSTRUCTIONS.

It being adjudged advisable to augment the cavalry in Continental Service by an addition of one Lieut., one Sergeant, one corporal, and twenty two privates to each Troop, and that the States of Virginia and North Carolina should furnish six hundred Horses for this purpose. You will receive from the Comee. of Congress (sitting at Moor Hall) direction respecting the means to obtain these; with which you will repair to Virginia, and as soon as possible consult Colonel Bland, who is requested by Letter to aid you in this business, and to whom you are to participate the means and furnish a copy of these Instructions, on the most effectual mode of accomplishing this purchase with œconomy and dispatch.

In purchasing these Horses you are not restricted to price on the one hand, nor by any means to launch into acts of extravagence on the other—good horses are wanting, and for such the customary prices must be given, take none less than a quarter blooded, nor under fourteen and a half hands high, sound and clean made. They are not to exceed twelve years old, nor be under five, this spring. Any kind of bays would be preferred;

but, as the time is short in which they must be procured, and the service without them will suffer, you must not stand upon color. Pacing Horses, Stone horses, and mares must be avoided.

Colo. Bland and yourself will figure upon proper places of rendezvous for the Horses when purchased, where provision is to be laid in for their support; and where every proper means is to be used for the exercise and training of them. You will so concert matters as not to interfere with each other, thereby enhancing the prices of horses and rendering the purchase more difficult and expensive.

You will, each of you, use your best endeavors to obtain saddles and other accoutrements for the number of Horse aforementioned, and procure also as many swords and pistols as you can.—To enable Colonel Bland to perform his part of this business, you are, as before directed, to furnish him with the money and certificates. To add anything with a view of impressing you with an idea of the great importance of this business, and the dispatch necessary in the execution is, I am persuaded, totally useless. Your own observation and judgment will point this out in the fullest and clearest manner, but I am to desire that both you and Colo. Bland will give me early, and regular, information of your proceedings and prospects.

Given under my hand at head Quarters, Valley Forge, this 4th day of March 1778.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 7 March, 1778.

SIR,

I take the liberty of transmitting to you copies of three letters from General Howe, of the 14th and 21st ultimo, and of the 2d instant, with their enclosures.[1]

[1] Laurens wrote on March 21st, that these letters were in a committee "from whom may be expected a special report respecting the many opprobrious terms and epithets scattered throughout the papers from Sir William Howe, applied to the good people of these United States, and to the representatives in Congress, which were heard by the House with great indignation. From expressions of sentiment by members on all sides it appears to be the general opinion, that such papers should have been marked with the contempt of an immediate return."

The unhappy violation of the flag of truce has laid us under no small embarrassments, and has afforded the enemy good grounds for complaint and triumph at the same time. This however is the natural consequence, and must ever be the case, where different powers counteract each other in matters of the most delicate importance. There are some circumstances attending this affair, which it may possibly be in the power of Congress to throw light upon. If they can, I shall be obliged by their assistance.

March 8th.—In consequence of the letters, which have lately passed between General Howe and myself, particularly those of the 5th and 10th ultimo, copies of which I had the honor to transmit to you in mine of the 8th, continued to the 14th, I was about to send commissioners to meet those appointed by General Howe for adjusting the disputed points between us, carrying into execution an exchange of prisoners, and improving the old cartel, as far as it might be practicable, for their better accommodation in future. This meeting was to be on the 10th instant; but, yesterday morning, Dunlap's paper of the 4th being put into my hands, I found that a resolution had been made on the 26th of February, calling for all accounts against prisoners in our hands, and declaring that no exchange should take place, till the balance due thereon to the United States is discharged. Some of the States are not required to exhibit their claims till the 1st of June. The time that would be taken to adjust them, and make a delivery of the prisoners, would more than exhaust all the ensuing summer.

This resolution I cannot consider as an intended infraction of my engagements with General Howe; yet its operation is diametrically opposite both to the spirit and letter of the propositions made on my part, and acceded to on his. I supposed myself fully authorized "by the instructions and intentions" of Congress to act as I did; and I now conceive, that the public as well as my own personal honor and faith are pledged for the performance.

By the direction of Congress, I in the first instance stipulated with General Howe an exchange of prisoners, "officer for officer, of equal rank, soldier for soldier, and citizen for citizen." This agreement they have ever approved, and repeatedly declared their willingness to carry into execution. Their resolution of the 24th of March last empowered me (on condition of General Lee being declared exchangeable) not only "*to proceed*" to the exchange of prisoners, according to the principles and regulations of the cartel before agreed on, but also to enter into such further principles and regulations as should appear to me most proper and advantageous. A subsequent resolution of the 6th of June holds forth the same language, sanctions my conduct and reasonings in the negotiations about that time on the subject, and directs an adherence to them. No event has occurred since that period, by which I could conclude there was any alteration in the views of Congress; so far from it, that all my late letters breathing the same spirit with the former, and pointedly signifying my wish to bring about a general exchange, if not with

an express, at least met with a tacit approbation. General Howe at length, by profession if not in reality, is willing to perform the agreement on the conditions required by me and confirmed by them.

It may be said, that, with whatever powers I was originally vested to negotiate an exchange, the resolution of the 19th of December last was an abridgment of them, so far as to annex a new condition, the settlement and payment of accounts previous to its taking place. I had no conception of this being the case in the present instance, however the letter may warrant the construction. Besides the common principle of preventing the inconveniences, necessarily resulting from allowing the enemy to make their payments in paper currency, I had reason to imagine that General Burgoyne's army was more particularly the object of the concluding clause. This interpretation I the more readily adopted, for, exclusive of the affairs of that army, I verily believed, that, from the confused, defective state of our accounts relating to prisoners, there would be a considerable balance in favor of Mr. Howe. Nor was the situation of our accounts the only reason for this belief; the prisoners in our hands, especially those westward of the Delaware, as I am informed, have been in a great measure supported by their own labor, and at the expense of the enemy, who have had agents constantly among us. If this is the case, the reason of the resolve not applying, the effect ought not of course.

But perhaps it may be thought contrary to our interest to go into an exchange, as the enemy would

derive more immediate advantage from it than we should. This I shall not deny; but it appeared to me, that, on principles of genuine, extensive policy, independent of the considerations of compassion and justice, we were under an obligation not to elude it. I have the best evidence, that an event of this kind is the general wish of the country. I know it to be the wish of the army; and no one can doubt, that it is the ardent wish of the unhappy sufferers themselves. We need only consult the tide of humanity, and the sympathies natural to those connected by the cement of blood, interest, and a common dread of evil, to be convinced, that the prevailing current of sentiment demands an exchange. If the country, the army, and even the prisoners themselves, had a precise idea of our circumstances, and could be fully sensible of the disadvantages, that might attend the giving our enemy a considerable reinforcement without having an equivalent, they might perhaps be willing to make a sacrifice of their feelings to the motives of policy. But they have not this knowledge, and cannot be entrusted with it; and their reasonings, of necessity, will be governed by what they feel.

Were an opinion once to be established (and the enemy and their emissaries know very well how to inculcate it, if they are furnished with a plausible pretext), that we designedly avoided an exchange, it would be a cause of dissatisfaction and disgust to the country and to the army, of resentment and desperation to our captive officers and soldiers. To say nothing of the importance of not hazarding our

national character but upon the most solid grounds, especially in our embryo state, from the influence it may have on our affairs abroad, it may not be a little dangerous to beget in the minds of our own countrymen a suspicion, that we do not pay the strictest observance to the maxims of honor and good faith.

It is prudent to use the greatest caution not to shock the notions of general justice and humanity, universal among mankind, as well in a public as a private view. In a business on the side of which the passions are so much concerned as in the present, men would be readily disposed to believe the worst, and cherish the most unfavorable conclusions. Were the letters, that have passed between General Howe and myself from first to last, and the procedings of Congress on the same subject, to be published with proper comments, it is much to be feared, if the exchange should be deferred till the terms of the last resolve were fulfilled, that it would be difficult to prevent our being generally accused of a breach of good faith. Perhaps it might be said, that, while the enemy refused us justice, we fondly embraced the opportunity to be loud, persevering, incessant in our claims; but, the moment they were willing to render it, we receded from ourselves, and started new difficulties. This, I say, might be the reasoning of speculative minds; and they might consider all our professions as *mere* professions; or, at best, that interest and policy were to be the only arbiters of their validity.

Imputations of this nature would have a tendency

to unnerve our operations, by diminishing that respect and confidence, which are essential to be placed in those, who are at the head of affairs either in the civil or military line. This, added to the prospect of hopeless captivity, would be a great discouragement to the service. The ill consequences of both would be immense, by increasing the causes of discontent in the army, which are already too numerous, and many of which are in a great measure unavoidable; by fortifying that unwillingness, which already appears too great, towards entering into the service, and of course impeding the progress both of drafting and recruiting; by dejecting the courage of the soldiery, from an apprehension of the horrors of captivity; and, finally, by reducing those, whose lot it is to drink the bitter cup, to a despair, which can only find relief by renouncing their attachments and engaging with their captors. These effects have already been experienced in part from the obstacles, that have lain in the way of exchanges; but if these obstacles were once to seem the result of system, they would become tenfold. Nothing has operated more disagreeably upon the minds of the militia, than the fear of captivity, on the footing on which it has hitherto stood. What would be their reasonings, if it should be thought to stand upon a worse?

If a present temporary interest is to be a ruling principle, it is easy to prove, that an exchange can never take place. The constitution of our army in respect to the term of service for which our men engage, and the dependence we are obliged to place on

the militia, must for ever operate against us in exchanges, and forbid an equality of advantages. Should it be said, there are times when it might be peculiarly unequal and injurious, and that the present is such, on account of the weak condition of our army, I answer, that the delay necessarily involved in the previous negotiation on the subject, in delivering the prisoners from time to time in small numbers, and receiving others in their stead, and the mode of delivery at different places, will nearly bring the matter to the point we could wish, and give us leisure to reinforce this army, if it is to be done at all, so as to obviate in a great measure the ill consequences apprehended.

But if the argument of interest on a partial scale be pursued as far as it will go, not only the general consideration thrown out above, but special ones apposite to every situation will present themselves, that we ought not to exchange. *Now* we ought not, because our army is weak! When the season is more advanced, and it is time for the campaign to open, we ought not, because our army may be strong, and it will be our business to avail ourselves of our own strength, and the enemy's weakness, to strike some decisive blow! If they, by the protection of their shipping and impregnable works, should be able to baffle our attempts till the period of reinforcements from Europe arrive, it will surely then not be our interest to add numbers and strength to an enemy already sufficiently numerous and strong! Thus, by a parity of reasoning, the golden era will never come, which is to relieve the

miseries of captivity. Our service must become odious; those who are out of it will endeavor to keep so; and those who are in it will wish to get out of it; every prisoner the enemy makes will be his soldier, rather than submit to a rigorous and despairing confinement.

If we do not seize the present propitious moment, when the necessities of the enemy press them to reasonable terms, to form and establish a liberal cartel, it is not impossible, in the vicissitudes and reverses of war, that a time may come when we should wish we had embraced it, and interest may strongly impel the enemy to decline it, except on the most unequal conditions. True policy, as well as good faith, in my opinion, binds us to improve the occasion. There are however some ambiguities in General Howe's conduct, which require explanation, and ought to put us upon our guard. I determined to make the affair of citizens (namely, to procure an exemption from captivity for them if possible, or, if not, since it cannot now be demanded as a matter of right, to fix their exchangeability upon the easiest and most unequivocal foundation,) an indispensable preliminary to any further procedure; and at the same time to secure the exchange of General Lee, and all other officers, who have been the particular objects of exception.

The interview intended between General Howe's commissioners and those on our part on the 10th instant is now postponed.[1] I cannot doubt that Con-

[1] "I have your letters of the 14th and 21st of February, and the 2d of March, of all which due notice shall be taken. Particular circumstances make it in-

gress, in preservation of the public faith and my personal honor, will remove all impediments, that now oppose themselves to my engagements, and that they will authorize me, through commissioners appointed for the purpose, to negotiate a more extensive and competent cartel, upon such principles as may appear advantageous and founded in necessity, and resolutions heretofore to the contrary notwithstanding; and I must request, that they will favor me with their answer by the earliest opportunity.

The work, from its nature, will be difficult. Two parties are concerned, whose interests are more than opposite in a common view. We shall endeavor to act for the best, and to promote the public service as far as possible, though we may not be able to answer the expectations of all. But it should be remembered, that, although General Howe's want of men affords a prospect of favorable terms, yet he will not be disposed to sacrifice to it all considerations of general advantage in a contract of such a nature; and it is not even to be hoped, that it can take place except on principles of mutual benefit. I persuade myself, that the freedom I have taken in delivering my sentiments so fully upon this occasion will readily be excused, as it proceeds from a desire to place the motives of my

convenient for my commissioners to meet yours at the time appointed. I must, therefore, beg to have the meeting deferred till the 31st of March."—*Washington to Sir William Howe*, 9 March, 1778. Sir William wrote, March 24th, to Lord George Germaine: "The time appointed for the meeting of the commissioners being postponed by General Washington to the 31st of this month, without assigning any satisfactory reason, leads me to believe that neither he, nor those under whose authority he acts, are sincere in their professions to carry an exchange into execution at this time."

conduct in a just point of view, and from an opinion of duty, that led me to a free discussion of a subject, which, considered in all its lights, will appear to comprehend consequences of the first delicacy and magnitude. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL PARSONS, AT WEST POINT.

VALLEY FORGE, 8 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Below you will recive a copy of my last dated the 5th, to which I will add a thought, which has occurred since the writing of it; and which, if the scheme is

[1] Read in Congress, March 16th.

After taking this letter into consideration, Congress voted to suspend the operation of their former resolves in the present instance, and authorized General Washington to proceed to an exchange of the prisoners then in the power of the enemy, without waiting for a previous settlement of accounts; but, in arranging any future cartels of exchange, he was required to act in conformity to the resolves, which ordered a liquidation of accounts for the support of prisoners, before they could be exchanged.—*Journals*, March 18th.

"Lately, a flag with provisions and clothing for the British prisoners, with General Washington's passport, was seized at Lancaster. The affair was attended with circumstances of violence. Still more lately, General Washington's engagement with General Howe, for an exchange of prisoners, has been violated. Congress have resolved, that no exchange shall take place till all accounts are settled and the balance due the United States paid. The beauty of it is, that, on a fair settlement we shall without doubt be in Mr. Howe's debt; and in the mean time we detain his officers and soldiers, as a security for the payment. The operation of this resolve, though it does not plainly appear upon the face of it, is to put off an exchange, perhaps for ever. At any rate, it cannot take place all next summer.

"It is thought to be bad policy to go into an exchange; but, admitting this to be true, it is much worse policy to commit such frequent breaches of faith, and ruin our national character. Whatever refined politicians may think, it is of great consequence to preserve a national character; and if it should once seem to be a system in any State to violate its faith, whenever it is the least inconvenient to keep it, it will unquestionably have an ill effect upon foreign negotiations, and tend to bring Government at home into contempt, and of

practicable at all, may add not a little to the success; namely, to let the officers and soldiers employed in the enterprise be dressed in red, and much in the taste of the British soldiery. Webb's regiment will afford these dresses; and it might not be amiss to know certainly the number of some regiment, that is quartered in the city. Under some circumstances, this knowledge may avail them, especially if the number on their own buttons should correspond thereto. I am, &c.

P. S. The official papers would be a vast acquisition and might without much difficulty accompany the person.

COPY OF THE LETTER REFERRED TO ABOVE.

5 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I learn from undoubted authority, that General Clinton quarters in Captain Kennedy's house in the city of New York, which you know is near Fort George, and, by the late fire, stands in a

course to destroy its influence. The general notions of justice and humanity are implanted in almost every human breast, and ought not to be too freely shocked. In the present case, the passions of the country and army are on the side of an exchange; and a studied attempt to avoid it will disgust both, and tend to make the service odious. It will injure drafting and recruiting, discourage the militia, and increase the discontents of the army. The prospect of hopeless captivity cannot but be very disagreeable to men constantly exposed to the chance of it. Those, whose lot it is to fall into it, will have little scruple to get rid of it by joining the enemy.

"It is said not to be our present interest to exchange, because we should endeavor, by and by, to take advantage of the enemy's weakness to strike some decisive blow. If we should fail in this, which I believe we shall, when they get reinforced, we shall not think it our interest to add to the strength of an enemy, already strong enough, and so on *ad infinitum*. The truth is, considered in the mere view of barter, it never can be our interest to exchange; the constitution of our army, from the short term of enlistment, and the dependence we are obliged to place in the militia, are strongly opposed to it;

manner alone. What guards may be at or near his quarters, I cannot with precision say ; and therefore shall not add any thing on this score, lest it should prove a misinformation. But I think it one of the most practicable, (and surely it will be among the most desirable and honorable) things imaginable to take him prisoner.

This house lying close by the water, and a retired way through a back yard or garden leading into it, what, if you have whale-boats, (8 or 10), but want of secrecy, can prevent the execution in the hands of an enterprising party? The embarkation might even be (and this I should think best) at King's Ferry, on the first of the ebb, and early in the evening. Six or eight hours, with change of hands, would row the boats under the west shore and very secretly to the city, and the flood-tide will hoist them back again ; or a party of horse might meet them at Fort Lee. I had like not to have mentioned that no ship of war is in the North River ; was not, at least ten days ago ; nor within four hundred yards of the Point ; all being in the East River. I shall add no more. This is dropped as a hint to be improved upon, or rejected, as circumstances point out and justify. I am, &c.[1]

and, if the argument of present interest be adhered to, we never can exchange. I may venture to assert, there never can be a time more proper than the present, or rather a month or two hence ; and, go about it as soon as we please, the previous negotiations necessary, and other circumstances, will of course procrastinate it for some time. And I would ask, whether in a republican State and a republican army, such a cruel policy as that of exposing those men, who are foremost in defence of their country, to the miseries of hopeless captivity, can succeed?"—*Hamilton to Governor Clinton*, 12 March, 1778.

[1] " Mrs. Washington has received the miniature, and wishes to know whether Major Rogers is still at York. The defects of this portrait, I think are, that the visage is too long, and old age is too strongly marked in it. He is not altogether mistaken with respect to the languor of the general's eye ; for altho' his countenance when affected either by joy or anger, is full of expression, yet when the muscles are in a state of repose, his eye certainly wants animation. My proficiency in this kind of drawing never went beyond sketching a profile. I never attempted to paint a miniature likeness of a full face. There is a miniature painter in camp who has made two or three successful attempts to produce the general's likeness."—*John Laurens to his father*, 9 March, 1778. Mr. W. S. Baker says in his *Engraved Portraits of Washington*, that Charles Willson Peale completed in December, 1777, a miniature for Mrs.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 10 March, 1778.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have had the pleasure of receiving your two favors of the 19th and 23d of February, and hasten to dispel those fears, respecting your reputation, which are excited only by an uncommon degree of sensibility. You seem to apprehend that censure, proportioned to the disappointed expectations of the world, will fall on you, in consequence of the failure of the Canadian expedition. But, in the first place, it will be no disadvantage to you to have it known in Europe, that you had received so manifest a proof of the good opinion and confidence of Congress, as an important detached command; and I am persuaded, that every one will applaud your prudence in renouncing a project, in pursuing which you would vainly have attempted physical impossibilities. Indeed, unless you can be chargeable with the invariable effects of natural causes, and be arraigned for not suspending the course of the seasons, to accommodate your march over the Lake, the most prone to slander can have nothing to found blame upon.

However sensible your ardor for glory may make you feel this disappointment, you may be assured, that your character stands as fair as ever it did, and that no new enterprise is necessary to wipe off this imaginary stain. The expedition, which you hint at, I

Washington. It was begun at the close of October. "An engraving by Dr. Mare from this miniature, or from a copy made by Peale himself, is published in Irving's Life of Washington, without being ascribed to the painter, and with the erroneous title 'Washington at the age of twenty-five.'" The painter mentioned by Laurens may have been Peale.

think unadvisable in our present circumstances.[1] Any thing in the way of a formal attack, which would necessarily be announced to the enemy by preparatory measures, would not be likely to succeed. If a stroke is meditated in that quarter, it must be effected by troops stationed at a proper distance for availing themselves of the first favorable opportunity offered by the enemy, and success would principally depend upon the suddenness of the attempt. This, therefore, must rather be the effect of time and chance, than premeditation. You undoubtedly have determined judiciously in waiting the further orders of Congress. Whether they allow me the pleasure of seeing you shortly, or destine you to a longer absence, you may assure yourself of the sincere good wishes of, dear Sir, &c.

P. S. Your directing payment of such debts as appear to be most pressing is certainly right. There is not money enough to answer every demand; and I wish your supplies of clothing had been better. Your ordering a large supply of provisions into Fort Schuyler was a very judicious measure, and I thank you for it.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL BURGOYNE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 11 March, 1778.

SIR,

I was only two days since honored with your very obliging letter of the 11th of February. Your indulgent opinion of my character, and the polite terms in which you are pleased to express it, are peculiarly

[1] A diversion upon New York.

TO THE M

My Dear Marqui

I have had the
favors of the 19th
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sensibility. You
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GEORGE WILLIAM FAIRFAX, IN ENGLAND.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PENNSYLVANIA,
11 March, 1778.

R,

liately on my appointment to the command
\merican army, and arrival at Cambridge,
)ston,) in the year 1775, I informed you of
racticability of my longer continuing to per-
e duties of a friend, by having an eye to the
t of your collector and steward; as my absence
Virginia would not only withdraw every little
ion I otherwise might have given to your busi-
but involve my own in the same neglected pre-
ent. What use you may have made of the in-
ıtion, I know not, having heard nothing from
these four years, nor been in Virginia these last
. I have heard, and fear it is true, that your
(Belvoir) is verging fast to destruction. In
ıt condition, and under what management, your
ıte in Berkeley is, I know not; and equally igno-
ıt am I respecting the conduct of Peyton, but
rnestly advise you to empower some person to
tend to these matters, or the consequence is obvious.
Lord Fairfax, as I have been told, after having
)wed down to the grave, and in a manner shaken
ınds with Death, is perfectly restored, and enjoys
is usual good health, and as much vigor as falls to
ıe lot of ninety. Your sister Washington [1] goes on

new to be respectable, is also perfectly amiable; and I should have few greater private gratifications in seeing our melancholy contest at an end, than that of cultivating your friendship."—April 4th.

[1] Hannah Fairfax, who married Warner Washington.

teeming but cannot produce a boy. Miss Fairfax was upon the point of marriage in December last with a relation of mine, a Mr. Whiting; but her ill health delayed it at that time, and what has happened since I know not. Your nieces in Alexandria are both married; the elder to Mr. Herbert, the younger to Mr. Harry Whiting, son of Frank in Berkeley. Mrs. Cary, her son Colonel Cary, Mr. Nicholas, Mrs. Ambler,[1] and their respective families were all well about two months ago. Miss Cary is married to Tom Nelson, second son to the Secretary.

Mrs. Washington, who is now in quarters with me, joins in most affectionate compliments to Mrs. Fairfax and yourself with, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 12 March, 1778.

SIR,

On Sunday night I had the honor to receive your favors of the 1st and 5th instant with their inclosures. I am happy to find, that my past conduct respecting citizens, in the correspondence between General Howe and myself, is approved by Congress. They may rest assured, that their rights are strongly impressed on my mind; and that, in all my transactions, every support in my power shall be given them. I know their importance; and, in my expected negotiations with General Howe, if possible, I will exempt citizens from captivity. However, I cannot hope to

[1] Miss Mary Cary, who married Edward Ambler.

effect it, as I cannot demand it as a matter of right; since Congress themselves, in their original resolve directing a proposition to be made for the exchange of prisoners, mentioned that of citizens, which implied a right of capturing them.

They may also be assured, that General Lee will not be forgotten. He has all along been a principal object in dispute; and, so far from doing any thing injurious to him, his right to be exchanged, and releasement, are intended to be placed upon the most explicit, unambiguous footing. Indeed, from the spirit of General Howe's letters collectively taken, since his agreement to enlarge the officers on parole in the first instance, and his extension of it in the last to an exchange, (though they are not free from ambiguities,) it may be inferred, that, on sending in Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers captured at Trenton, an exchange of officers will immediately commence. It seems to be a point with him, that it shall begin with them, as they have been longest in captivity. I have taken the liberty to enclose to you copies of three letters, which have just passed between General Howe and myself, more particularly concerning General Lee, in which I have pushed matters respecting him as far as I thought it prudent at this time. Every precaution will certainly be used to prevent the enemy gaining any advantage in the exchange of prisoners.[1]

[1] "Mr. Boudinot, who has lately returned to camp from New York, informs me, that notwithstanding Major-General Prescott has been several weeks in the city, in pursuance of our agreement for the liberation of officers on parole, General Lee is not permitted to come out; and that orders had been received

With great deference I would take the liberty to observe, that Congress seem to have carried the preamble of their resolve of the 26th ultimo, prohibiting the enlisting &c. of prisoners and deserters, too far; and, through accident, to have recited a fact, that has never happened (at least to my knowledge), and which is injurious to us, namely, that prisoners had been enlisted by us. If any have, it is what I never knew. However, be this as it may, if the resolution has not been published, I could wish the preamble to be altered, and to recite, "*that experience*, &c. in *deserters*" only. The resolution itself may stand as it does, comprehending a prohibition against the enlistment of both.

[illegible]

My reason for troubling Congress upon this occasion is, we have always complained against General Howe, and still do, for obliging or permitting the prisoners in his hands to enlist, as an unwarrantable procedure, and wholly repugnant to the spirit at least of the cartel. This preamble seems to admit the practice on our part, which would certainly justify it in him, and is such evidence as must silence us in future (should it stand), and afford him an opportunity for recrimination, though, as I have suggested, I believe no prisoners have ever been enlisted by us; I am sure none have through compulsion.[1]

I have the pleasure to transmit you an extract of a letter from Captn. Barry, which will inform you of his successes. The two ships he burnt, after stripping them, and he was obliged, it seems, two days after the capture, to ground and abandon the Schooner after a long and severe engagement with some of the Enemy's Frigates & smaller armed Vessels.—It is said he saved her guns & most of her tackle.

I also take the liberty to lay before Congress copies of letters from Messrs Champion, Wadsworth & Reed. From the uniformity of sentiment held forth by these Gentlemen, it is much to be feared, the measures lately adopted by the Commissioners at

[1] The preamble and resolve had probably been published before the above letter was received by Congress, since they both now stand in the Journals as they were originally passed. "Whereas experience has proved, that no confidence can be placed in prisoners of war or deserters from the enemy, who enlist into the Continental army, but many losses and great mischiefs have frequently happened by them; therefore, Resolved, that no prisoners of war or deserters from the enemy be enlisted, drafted, or returned, to serve in the Continental army."—February 26th.

New Haven for regulating the prices of provision will have a disagreeable effect upon our supplies of meat.—How far it may be practicable to suspend their operation for a time, I cannot determine—but if it can be done, it appears we should experience many advantages from it.—It is a matter of great importance, and as such is submitted to Congress for their consideration. If any thing can be done to procure supplies of provisions, particularly of the salt kind, I should suppose I am persuaded it will not be omitted. I have the honor &c.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
12 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR

I should have answered your favr. of the 14th January before this time, had I not have been daily in hopes that I should have been able to have given you a satisfactory account of a change of men and measures in the North River Department. It has not been an easy matter to find a just pretence for removing an officer from his Command where his misconduct rather appears to result from want of Capacity than from any real intention of doing wrong, and it is therefore as you observe to be lamented that he cannot see his own defects and make an honorable retreat from a Station in which he only exposes his own weakness.

Proper measures are taking to carry on the enquiry into the loss of Fort Montgomery agreeable to the

direction of Congress, and it is more than probable, from what I have heard, that the issue of that enquiry will afford just grounds for a removal of Genl. P—— but whether it does or not, the prejudices of all ranks in that quarter against him are so great, that he must at all events be prevented from returning.[1] I hope to introduce a gentleman in his place, if the general course of service will admit of it, who will be perfectly agreeable to the State and to the public. In the mean time I trust that Genl. Parsons will do every thing in his power to carry on the works which from his last accounts are in more forwardness than I expected.

I wish all the men on the upper part of the River had been drawn down to the Highlands instead of

[1] Putnam is referred to in these sentences. To Governor Clinton, Washington wrote on the 12th: "The hints which you were pleased to give of mismanagement in the North River command came also from several other hands, and did not a little embarrass me, as they contain charges rather resulting from want of judgment than any real intention to do wrong. It is much to be lamented that we should have officers of so high a rank as to entitle them to claim separate commands with so moderate a share of abilities to direct them in the execution of those commands." For an extreme view of Putnam's abilities, see Dawson, *Major-General Israel Putnam*.

"Your Excellency is not ignorant of the extent of General Putnam's capacity and diligence; and how well soever these may qualify him for this most important command, the prejudices to which his imprudent lenity to the disaffected, and too great intercourse with the enemy, have given rise, have greatly injured his influence. How far the loss of Fort Montgomery and the subsequent ravages of the enemy are to be attributed to him, I will not venture to say; as this will necessarily be determined by a court of inquiry, whose determinations I would not anticipate. Unfortunately for him, the current of popular opinion in this and the neighboring States, and as far as I can learn in the troops under his command, runs strongly against him. For my own part, I respect his bravery and former services, and sincerely lament, that his patriotism will not suffer him to take that repose, to which his advanced age and past services justly entitle him."—*Robert R. Livingston to Washington*, 14 January, 1778.

being kept to carry on an expedition, in which I never was consulted, but which I saw from the beginning could never succeed, from a variety of Reasons which it would be needless to give you or any man acquainted with the State of the Country thro' which it was to have passed. Those who were most sanguine I fancy now see the impracticability of it.

Peekskill and the neighboring Posts were, by Resolves of Congress included in the Northern department, and the care of carrying on the Works put under the direction of the Officer Commanding in that district. Genl. Gates being after the Resolve called to the Board of War, he had no opportunity of doing any thing towards it. Whether there will be any alteration in the extent of the command this campaign I cannot tell, but if it falls again into that department more immediately under my particular command you may depend that all the attention due to posts so important shall be paid to them. I am.

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER, JAMES DUANE, AND VOLKERT P. DOUW, COMMISSIONERS OF INDIAN AFFAIRS.

VALLEY FORGE, 13 March, 1778.

GENTLEMEN,

You will perceive, by the enclosed copy of a resolve of Congress, that I am empowered to employ a body of four hundred Indians, if they can be procured upon proper terms. Divesting them of the savage customs exercised in their wars against each other, I think they may be made of excellent use as scouts and light troops, mixed with our own parties. I propose to raise about one half the number among the southern,

and the remainder among the northern Indians. I have sent Colonel Nathaniel Gist, who is well acquainted with the Cherokees and their allies, to bring as many as he can from thence; and I must depend upon you to employ suitable persons to procure the stipulated number, or as near as may be, from the northern tribes. The terms made with them should be such as you think we can comply with; and persons well acquainted with their language, manners, and customs, and who have gained an influence over them, should accompany them. The Oneidas have manifested the strongest attachment to us throughout this dispute, and therefore I suppose, if any can be procured, they will be most numerous. Their missionary, Mr. Kirkland, seemed to have an uncommon ascendancy over that tribe, and I should therefore be glad to see him accompany them.

If the Indians can be procured, I would choose to have them here by the opening of the campaign; and therefore they should be engaged as soon as possible, as there is not more time between this and the middle of May, than will be necessary to settle the business with them, and to march from their country to the army. I am not without hopes, that this will reach you before the treaty, which is to be held, breaks up. If it should, you will have an opportunity of knowing their sentiments, of which I shall be glad to be informed as soon as possible. I have the honor to be, gentlemen, &c.[1]

[1] A short time before Congress passed the resolve, conferring the authority described above, the subject had been vehemently discussed in the British Parliament, (February 6th,) on a motion of Mr. Burke to call for the papers

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 14 March, 1778.

SIR,

This will be presented to you by Count Pulaski, who, from a conviction that his remaining at the head of the cavalry was a constant subject of uneasiness to the principal officers of that corps, has been induced to resign his command. Waving a minute inquiry into the causes of dissatisfaction, which may be reduced perhaps to the disadvantages under which he labored, as a stranger not well acquainted with the language, genius, and manners of this country, it may be sufficient to observe, that the degree of harmony, which is inseparable from the well-being and consequent utility of a corps, has not subsisted in the

which had passed between the ministry and the generals commanding in America, relative to the military employment of Indians. The act was denounced as criminal, and the ministers were censured with much asperity by the prominent opposition members for abetting and approving it. Mr. Burke said: "No proof whatever had been given of the Americans having attempted offensive alliances with any one tribe of savages; whereas the imperfect papers now before that House demonstrated, that the King's ministers had negotiated and obtained such alliances from one end of the continent of America to the other; that the Americans had actually made a treaty on the footing of neutrality with the famous Five Nations, which the King's ministers had bribed them to violate, and to act offensively against the colonies; that no attempt had been made in a single instance on the part of the King's ministers to procure a neutrality; that if the fact had been, that the Americans had actually employed those savages, yet the difference of employing them against armed and trained soldiers, embodied and encamped, and employing them against the unarmed and defenceless men, women, and children of a country, dispersed in their houses, was manifest, and left those, who attempted so inhuman and unequal a retaliation, without excuse."

Lord George Germaine spoke in reply, and justified the conduct of administration. He said "the matter lay within a very narrow compass; the Indians would not have remained idle spectators; the very arguments used by the honorable gentleman, who made the motion, were so many proofs that they would not. Besides, the rebels, by their emissaries, had made frequent applications

cavalry since his appointment, and that the most effectual as well as the easiest remedy is that, which he has generously applied.

The Count, however, far from being disgusted with the service, is led by his thirst of glory, and zeal for the cause of liberty, to solicit farther employment, and waits upon Congress to make his proposals. They are briefly, that he be allowed to raise an independent corps, composed of sixty-eight horse and two hundred foot, the horse to be armed with lances, and the foot equipped in the manner of light-infantry. The former he thinks he can readily fill with natives of good character, and worthy the trust reposed in them. With respect to the other, he is desirous of more latitude,

to the Indians to side with them, the Virginians particularly; and he said, that some Indians were employed at Boston in the rebel army. Now taking the disposition of the Indians, with the applications made to them by the colonies, it amounted to a clear, indisputable proposition, that either they would have served against us, or that we must have employed them." Lord North said, on the same side, "that, in respect to the employment of Indians, he looked upon it as bad, but unavoidable."

Governor Pownall, who had resided long in America, and understood the Indian character perfectly, was of the same opinion. He proposed a scheme of his own. "I know," said he, "and therefore speak directly, that the idea of an Indian neutrality is nonsense; delusive, dangerous nonsense. If both we and the Americans were agreed to observe a strict neutrality in not employing them, they would then plunder and scalp both parties indiscriminately on both sides. Although this is my opinion, founded on the knowledge and experience I have had in these matters, yet I am persuaded, that if we and the Americans would come to some stipulation, or convention, that we would mutually and in a spirit of good faith not suffer the Indians to intermeddle, but consider and act against them as enemies, whenever they did execute hostilities against any of the British nation, whether English or Americans, all this horrid business might be prevented, or at least in a great measure restrained." Governor Pownall enlarged upon his scheme, and even offered to proceed himself to Congress, if duly authorized, and use his endeavors with that body to carry it into effect.—Almon's *Parliamentary Register*, vol. viii., pp. 349, 353, 357.

so as to have liberty of engaging prisoners and deserters from the enemy.

The original plan for the lance-men was to have drafted them from the regiments of horse. But, as this method would produce a clashing of interests, and perhaps occasion new disturbances, the Count prefers having a corps totally unconnected with any other. My advice to him, therefore, is to enlist his number of cavalry with the Continental bounty; and, if it should be found consonant to the views of Congress to allow his raising the number proposed over and above the establishment for the horse, then he would have them on the footing of an independent corps; if not, he might at all events have them as drafts; and in this case there would be no ground for complaint. With regard to the infantry, which the Count esteems essential to the success of the cavalry, I have informed him, that the enlisting deserters and prisoners is prohibited by a late resolve of Congress. How far Congress might be inclined to make an exception, and license the engaging of prisoners in a particular detached corps, in which such characters may be admitted with less danger than promiscuously in the line, I could not undertake to pronounce.

I have only to add, that the Count's valor and active zeal on all occasions have done him great honor; and, from a persuasion that, by being less exposed to the inconveniences which he has hitherto experienced, he will render great services with such a command as he asks for, I wish him to succeed in his application. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. It is to be understood, that the Count expects to retain his rank as brigadier, and, I think, is entitled to it from his general character and particular disinterestedness on the present occasion.[1]

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

VALLEY FORGE, 14 March, 1778.

SIR,

I have the honor of yours of the 2d instant; and, I can assure you, I feel myself very sensibly affected by the strenuous manner in which you express the public regard of the State and your personal friendship towards me. I only desire to be the object of both, while in your good opinion and that of the public I continue to merit them.

We seem hitherto to have mistaken each other, in respect to the troop of light-horse. I did not mean to inlist them in the Continental service, but only to engage them for a few months, while the Continental horse were recruiting, upon the same terms that I engaged the Morris County horse last winter. It will be expected, that they provide their own horses, arms, and accoutrements, and be paid accordingly. If Captain Arnold will come into the service upon the above terms, I will immediately take him into employ.

[1] The rank of brigadier-general was continued to Count Pulaski, and he was authorized to raise and command an independent corps, to consist of sixty-eight horse and two hundred foot. The latter were to be equipped in the manner of light-infantry, and the former to be armed with lances. The mode of raising and organizing the corps was left to the direction of General Washington.—*Journals*, March 28th.

I am exceedingly glad to hear of the response you have already made in the Quarter Master's and Commissary's department at Princetown and doubt not, but if you pursue the same line of conduct thro' the other posts, that the public will not only save immense sum of Money, but be better served, for those supernumeraries, like useless wheels in a machine, only clog and perplex the more essential parts. It is impossible to devise any other mode of disposing of deserters, than to let them go at large among us, provided there is no particular cause of suspicion against them. To confine them would effectually put a stop to a drain, which weakens the enemy more, in the course of a year, than you would imagine. I am pleased with the favorable account which you give of Count Pulaski's conduct while at Trenton. He is a gentleman of great activity and unquestionable bravery, and only wants a fuller knowledge of our language and customs to make him a valuable officer. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL McDOUGALL.

HEAD QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
16 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I was favored with yours of the 17th ultimo in due time, and should have proceeded immediately upon the business of the inquiry, had not General Putnam's private affairs required his absence for some little time. I have appointed Brigadier-General Hunt-

ington and Colonel Wigglesworth to assist you in this matter; and, enclosed, you will find instructions empowering you, in conjunction with them, to carry on the inquiry agreeable to the resolve of Congress. You will observe by the words of the resolve, that the inquiry is to be made into the loss of Forts Montgomery and Clinton, in the State of New York, and into the conduct of the principal officers commanding those forts.

Hence the officer commanding in chief in that department will be consequentially involved in the inquiry; because if he has been deficient in affording the proper support to those posts, when called upon to do it, the commandant and principal officers will of course make it appear by the evidence produced in their own justification. I am not certain whether General Putnam has yet returned to Fishkill; and I have therefore by the enclosed, which you will please to forward to him by express, given him notice that the inquiry is to be held, and have desired him to repair immediately to that post.[1] General Huntington and

[1] "The Congress having, by a resolve of the 28th of November last, directed that an inquiry be made into the loss of Forts Montgomery and Clinton, and into the conduct of the principal officers commanding those forts, I have appointed Major-General McDougall, Brigadier-General Huntington, and Colonel Wigglesworth, to carry the resolve into execution. It is more than probable, that the conduct of the officer commanding at the time in that department will be involved in the inquiry, and I therefore desire, that you would repair immediately to Fishkill upon the receipt of this, to meet General McDougall and the other gentlemen.

"General McDougall is to take the command of the posts in the Highlands. My reason for making this change is owing to the prejudices of the people, which, whether well or ill grounded, must be indulged;—and I should think myself wanting in justice to the public and candor towards you, were I to continue you in a command, after I have been almost in direct terms informed, that

Colonel Wigglesworth will set out as soon as they can make preparations for the journey.

Upon your arrival at the Highlands, you are to take upon you the command of the different posts in that department, of which I have advised General Putnam. Your time will at first be principally taken up with the business, which you now have in hand; but I beg that your attention may be turned, as much as possible, to the completion of the works, or at least to putting them in such a state, that they may be able to resist a sudden attack of the enemy. Governor Clinton has wrote his opinion very fully to Congress upon the propriety of ordering all the troops, except the garrison of Fort Schuyler, down to the Highlands, as all prospects of carrying on the northern expedition seem to have vanished. I have backed his opinion forcibly with my own, and hope, if Congress see matters in the light we do, that those troops may be instantly brought down. I have, &c.

P. S. There has been a resolve of Congress vesting Governor Clinton with the direction of the works erecting for the defence of the river, and requiring the commanding officer at Peekskill to aid him in the execution of the same. Governor Clinton, I understand, from his civil avocations, does not incline to take the immediate direction of the business, and the late commanding officer in that quarter has doubted

the people of the state of New York will not render the necessary support and assistance, while you remain at the head of that department. When the inquiry is finished, I desire that you will return to Connecticut and superintend the forwarding on the new levies with the greatest expedition."—*Washington to Major-General Putnam*, 16 March, 1778.

from that resolve, whether his command or superintendency extended to the forts. To remove difficulties of this kind, by which the public service must suffer, and as I consider it essential to the nature of the command, that one officer should have the general control and direction of all the posts in the Highlands and their dependencies, and be answerable for them, you are to consider yourself as possessed of this general control and direction, and to act accordingly. If the Governor has leisure from his official duties to undertake the more immediate management of the works, it will afford you a very desirable assistance.

I have written to Congress to give you every power necessary to promote the objects of your command; and in the mean time you are to consider yourself authorized, as far as can depend upon me, to take every measure conducive to that end. I am sensible this command will not be in itself the most agreeable piece of service, and that you would prefer a post on the principal theatre of action; but the vast importance of it has determined me to confide it in you, and I am persuaded your object is to be useful to the public. If you get things in a proper train by the opening of the campaign, so as that the prosecution may be assigned to other hands, I shall be extremely happy to avail myself of your services with the main army.[1]

[1] There had been a series of misapprehensions on the subject of constructing military works in the Highlands, as well as a train of obstacles to their progress. On the 5th of November, Congress had appointed General Gates to command in the Highlands, or rather had connected that post with the Northern Depart-

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
16 March, 1778.

SIR,

I have the honor to transmit to you a letter from Governor Clinton, which he enclosed to me for my perusal and consideration.

The inconvenience he mentions, as resulting from the resolve respecting the appointment of a commandant for Forts Montgomery and Clinton, requires to be obviated. I do not conceive it to have been the design of Congress to make the command of those forts altogether distinct and independent on the general command of the posts in that quarter; but only to designate the rank of the officer, who should have the immediate charge of them. There

ment, and invested him with ample powers to carry on the works; but, as he was made President of the Board of War, he never entered upon these duties. Again, on the 18th of February, Governor Clinton was requested to take the superintendence of the works; but the multiplicity of his civil employments made it necessary for him to decline the undertaking. Meantime General Putnam went to Connecticut, and left the post in charge of General Parsons. Unfortunately this officer conceived the notion, that he had no control over the works in the Highlands; that the resolve of Congress in regard to Gates and Clinton were personal, and not designed to apply to any one else; and that, having no direct instructions, he could not rightfully assume any authority in the matter. By the judicious advice of Governor Clinton, however, he was prevailed upon to exercise a proper supervision, till General McDougall arrived. When these doubts in regard to the extent of command are considered, and also the tardy movements of the engineer in executing a plan which he did not approve, the extreme fatigue of the service in the midst of winter, the privations and sufferings of the men, and the want of teams and other necessary aids, it is not surprising that very slow progress had been made. General McDougall took the command on the 28th of March. Two days previously Kosciuszko arrived, who had been appointed engineer in the place of Radière. From that time the works were pressed forward with spirit. To the scientific skill and sedulous application of Kosciuszko, the public was mainly indebted for the construction of the military defences at West Point.—*Sparks.*

is such an intimate connexion between the forts and the other posts and passes in the Highlands and their vicinity, that it is necessary for one officer to have the superintendency and control of the whole, and to be answerable for all. If this were not to be the case, but the command were to be divided, there might want that coöperation between the garrisons and the troops without, which might be essential to their preservation and to the common purposes of defence. The assigning a fixed number of men to the garrisons would not remove this inconvenience; for the coöperation would still be necessary. But if it were otherwise, I should not think the measure advisable, because we do not know what number of men we may have in the field next campaign; and the number for the defence of the Highlands must be proportioned to the general strength, and the force of the garrisons to that number.

On these considerations, having ordered General McDougall to repair to the Highlands to assume the chief command there, I have comprehended the forts among the other objects of his trust; in the discharge of which I am persuaded he will manifest adequate zeal and ability. But as the resolve in question affords room for doubt, it will be proper to have it explained, so as more explicitly to ascertain the intention of Congress. I am perfectly in sentiment with Governor Clinton, on the propriety of drawing the troops from the northward to reinforce and carry on the works in the Highlands. From every thing I can learn, there seems to be no prospect of prosecut-

ing the intended expedition into Canada. If so, I apprehend it can answer no valuable end to keep a body of troops in and about Albany. In the present circumstances of Canada, little is to be dreaded thence; the enemy, in all probability, will be well satisfied to act on the defensive, without risking the consequences of an attempt against us. A proper garrison at Fort Schuyler, and a small party by way of guard at Albany, with the militia of the country that may be occasionally drawn together, will be a sufficient security against the inroads of the enemy from Canada, or the depredations of the neighboring Indians, supposing there were any of the tribes, whose dispositions were still actively hostile notwithstanding our late northern successes, which is by no means a natural supposition. All the men, more than are wanted for these purposes, would be of the most important utility in the Highlands.

If the arms and stores at Albany should be thought an objection to the plan, I would beg leave to observe, that Albany appears to me a most improper place for stationary arsenals or magazines, and that those which are there at present should be removed without delay. Besides, as they would be in most danger from an incursion up the North River, the best way to counteract that danger is to strengthen the passes in the Highlands, and obstruct the navigation; in order to which the reinforcing them with the troops from the northward would be no inconsiderable step. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] In consequence of this letter the Congress decided that all the troops in the State of New York, including the whole Northern Department, should be under

TO JAMES BOWDOIN, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS.

VALLEY FORGE, 17 March, 1778.

SIR,

It gives me inexpressible concern to have repeated information from the best authority, that the committees of the different towns and districts of your State hire deserters from General Burgoyne's army, and employ them as substitutes, to excuse the personal service of the inhabitants. I need not enlarge upon the danger of substituting, as soldiers, men, who have given a glaring proof of a treacherous disposition, and who are bound to us by no motives of attachment, to citizens, in whom the ties of country, kindred, and sometimes property are so many securities for their fidelity. The evils with which this measure is pregnant are obvious, and of such a serious nature, as makes it necessary, not only to stop the farther progress of it, but likewise to apply a retrospective remedy, and if possible to annul it, so far as it has been carried into effect. Unless this is done, although you may be amused for the present with the flattering idea of speedily completing your battalions, they will be found, at or before the opening of the campaign, reduced by the defection of every British soldier to their original weak condition; and the accumulated

one general officer, and that he should be authorized to draw together at the Highlands such parts of them as he should deem expedient. To supply the place of those at Albany, the Governor of New York was requested to furnish such a number of militia as would be sufficient to protect the arsenal and magazines at that place, till the progress of the obstructions at the Highlands should put them out of danger of any sudden attempt from the enemy.—*Journals*, March 31st.

bounties of the continent and of the State will have been fruitlessly sacrificed.

Indeed, Mr. Burgoyne could hardly, if he were consulted, suggest a more effectual plan for plundering us of so much money, reinforcing General Howe with so many men, and preventing us from recruiting a certain number of regiments; to say nothing of the additional losses, which may be dreaded, in desertions among the native soldiers, from the contagion of ill example and the arts of seduction, which it is more than probable will be put in practice. This matter demands your immediate attention, and I flatter myself, that on a due consideration of the mischiefs, which must inevitably flow from the pernicious practice remonstrated against, you will not delay the application of the most extensive and efficacious remedy. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, Sir, &c.[1]

[1] "The evil which I apprehended from the inlistment of deserters, . . . has already made its appearance. One of the colonels informs me that every British deserter sent to his Regiment except one, has already gone off. One of these people a few nights ago took off a light horse with his accoutrements from an advanced picket. I hope upon this proof of the infidelity of the above described class, that a total stop will be put to the hiring them. It is now prohibited by an express resolve of Congress passed a few weeks ago."— *Washington to Governor Bowdoin*, 31 March, 1778. *Journals of Congress*, 26 February, 1778.

"You must have misunderstood me, if you thought I gave you permission to raise a new and separate corps. I told you I had no power to grant such a request, but that, if you could obtain permission from Congress, or the committee of Congress in camp, I should have no objection to the measure and to your enlisting prisoners. I am certain I never gave you any encouragement to enlist deserters, because I have ever found them of the greatest injury to the service, by debauching our own men, and had therefore given positive orders to all recruiting officers not to enlist them upon any terms. The Congress have since made an express resolve against it, and also against enlisting prisoners."— *Washington to Colonel Armand*, 25 March, 1778.

"Some little time past, I wrote to the President and Council of Massachu-

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOHN CADWALADER.

VALLEY FORGE, 20 March, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 12th instant came safe to my hands and gave me sincere pleasure; as it encouraged a hope, which I had before entertained, of seeing you in camp again. Most sincerely do I wish it was in my power to point out some post or place in the army, which would invite you to and fix you in it. We want your aid exceedingly; and the public, perhaps at no time since the commencement of the war, would be more benefited by your advice and assistance, than at the present, and throughout the whole of this campaign, which must be important and critical. One thing certain is; a seat at my board, and a square on my floor, shall always be reserved for you. But this, though it would add to my pleasure, is not the height of my wishes. I want to see you in a more important station.

By death and desertion we have lost a good many men since we came to this ground, and have encountered every species of hardship, that cold, wet, and hunger, and want of clothes, were capable of producing; notwithstanding, and contrary to my expecta-

setts, informing them that several of the towns had hired British deserters, and sent them on by way of substitutes. Since writing that letter, eleven of these people have come from one district, and I doubt not many more will follow. I shall be obliged to send them back, or they will most certainly, as they ever have done, desert again to the enemy and carry off their arms. I desired the Council to put a stop to this practice, and I beg you will mention it to them, and point out the injury it does the service. By a late resolve of Congress, there is an absolute prohibition to the enlistment of deserters, it being better to be deficient in the quota, than to have such men."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 25 March, 1778.

tions, we have been able to keep the soldiers from mutiny or dispersion; although, in the single article of provisions, they have encountered enough to have occasioned one or the other of these in most other armies. They have been (two or three times) days together without provisions; and once, six days without any of the meat kind. Could the poor horses tell their tale, it would be in a strain still more lamentable, as numbers have actually died from pure want. But, as our prospects begin to brighten, my complaints shall cease.

It gives me much pleasure to hear, that the recruiting service in the counties near you is in so hopeful a way; but I despair of seeing our battalions completed by any other means than drafting. The importance of the place you speak of is obvious. It has engrossed much of my thoughts; but in our present situation and under our present prospects it is one of those things, that is more like to become an object of our desire, than attainment.

I have every reason short of absolute proof to believe, that General Howe is meditating a stroke against this army. He has drawn, some say two thousand, and others twenty-five hundred, men from New York, who I believe are arrived at Philadelphia, as a number of transports have just past Wilmington in their way up the Delaware; and reports from Newport say, that the garrison there had orders to be in readiness to embark by the 20th instant. Their invalids had gone off for England, and the women and children for New York. I am, &c.[1]

[1] "Sunday next being the time on which the Quakers hold one of their general meetings, a number of that society will probably be attempting to go into

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
21 March, 1778.

SIR,

I have the honor of yours of the 14th & 15th instants.

In consequence of the resolves transmitted to me, I have despatched an express to the Marquis de Lafayette and Baron de Kalb, to recall them from the northward[1]; and, instead of ordering down Hazen's regiment to rejoin this army, I have ordered Van Schaick's immediately to the Highlands, where the public works are in a manner at a stand for want of hands. Van Schaick's is a full and fresh regiment; Hazen's but weak in point of numbers, and must be considerably fatigued from their late long march.[2]

Philadelphia. This is an intercourse that we should by all means endeavor to interrupt, as the plans settled at these meetings are of the most pernicious tendency. I would therefore have you dispose of your parties in such a manner as will most probably fall in with these people."—*Washington to General Lacey*, 20 March, 1778.

[1] The Canada expedition having failed, from the want of proper means and suitable preparations for carrying it into effect, the Marquis de Lafayette and Baron de Kalb were directed by Congress to repair to the main army.—*Secret Journals*, vol. i., p. 65. Conway was left with the command at Albany, but he remained only a short time, when by order of Congress he joined the army under General McDougall in the Highlands.

"In pursuance of a resolve of Congress of the 13th instant, a copy of which is enclosed, I am to desire, that you will without loss of time return to camp, to resume the command of a division of this army; and that you will communicate a similar order to Major-General de Kalb. By the second resolve of the same date, you will see that I am empowered to order Hazen's or any other regiment from the northward to join this army. I intend no other change for the present, than to have Van Schaick's regiment marched to the Highlands to receive the orders of Major-General McDougall, and I desire, that you will give orders in consequence to the commanding officer of that regiment. I anticipate the pleasure of seeing you, and with sincere assurances of esteem and regard, remain, dear Sir, yours."—*Washington to Lafayette*, 28 March, 1778.

[2] They had marched from Wilmington in Delaware, during the severe season of winter.

Enclosed you have the copy of a letter, which I received a few days ago from Doctor Rush. As this letter contains charges of a very heinous nature against the director-general, Doctor Shippen, for mal-practices and neglect in his department, I could not but look upon it as meant for a public accusation, and have therefore thought it incumbent upon me to lay it before Congress. I have showed it to Doctor Shippen, that he may be prepared to vindicate his character, if called upon. He tells me, that Doctor Rush made charges of a similar nature before a committee of Congress, appointed to hear them, which he could not support. If so, Congress will not have further occasion to trouble themselves in the matter.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 22 March, 1778.

SIR,

Your several letters of the 15, 19, & 21st. instant have been duly received.

You are under a mistake as to the rank of Mr. Ethan Allen, which is only that of lieutenant-colonel; and as such he has been returned and considered by your commissary, Mr. Loring. The fact truly is, to the best of my information, that, at the time of his capture, he had an appointment as lieutenant-colonel from the State of New York, in a regiment com-

[1] Read in Congress, April 3d. Referred to Mr. Drayton, Huntington, and Banister.

manded by Colonel Warner. Though he may have been called Colonel in some letters of mine, it was either through misconception at the time, or by a concise and familiar mode of expression, which frequently applies that term to a lieutenant-colonel. I shall, therefore, expect him in exchange for Mr. Campbell.[1]

I am, by no means, sensible of the propriety of so rigorous a proceeding as you have adopted in the case of Captains Robinson and Galt—especially as it respects the former. Your Letter gave me the first notice, I had, of any circumstance of the affair, and I can, without scruple, assure you, I am not conscious, that they had any sinister view in what they did. It is evident, no deception nor any thing unfair could have been intended by Captain Robinson, as he was previously announced to you and your passport obtained. He was a person too well known in Philadelphia to have hoped to escape detection, under the mask of a fictitious and disguised character. The destruction of the Armed brig he formerly commanded, threw him out of actual employment; and

[1] This conjecture, as to Ethan Allen's rank, is not precisely accurate. He was not commissioned in the regiment of Green Mountain Boys, as it was called, which was raised by the authority of New York, in the summer of 1775, and commanded by Seth Warner, with the rank of *lieutenant-colonel*. The only commission, which Ethan Allen had received, was that conferred upon him by the committees of Bennington and the adjoining settlements before the war, when the people of the Green Mountains resolved to take up arms in defence of their rights against what they deemed the unjust encroachments of the New York government, in claiming and seizing their lands. He was then made their military leader, with the rank of *colonel-commandant*.—See Sparks' *Life of Ethan Allen*, in *The Library of American Biography*, vol. i., pp. 246, 291.—*Sparks*.

his taking charge of the Shallop, destined to convey relief to the unfortunate, can only be deemed an instance of his condescension. I know nothing of Captain Galt, but it is not improbable he was actuated by similar motives. If the conduct of both or either of them was influenced in part by other incentives, I am persuaded they only related to private and personal concerns and might authorize a charge of indiscretion rather than of ill design. You were expressly told that Captain Isaiah Robinson was to have charge of the Shallop—your own passport ought to have protected him; since it is not pretended, that he committed any act in the execution of his commission, which could have forfeited its protection. I am well aware of the delicacy which ought to be observed in the intercourse of Flags, and that no species of imposition should be practiced under their sanction—But there are some little deviations, which inadvertency or the imprudence of individuals may occasion, which are more properly cause for Remonstrance than punishment. The present event on an impartial consideration will not appear any thing worse, and I think myself fully justified in demanding the immediate restoration of Captain Robinson, and desiring the release of Capt. Galt.

The conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Brooks, in detaining John Miller, requires neither palliation nor excuse. I justify and approve it. There is nothing so sacred in the character of the King's trumpeter, even when sanctified by a flag, as to alter the nature of things, or to consecrate infidelity and guilt. He

was a deserter from the army under my command; and, whatever you have been pleased to assert to the contrary, it is the practice of war and nations to seize and punish deserters wherever they may be found. His appearing in the character he did was an aggravation of his offence, inasmuch as it added insolence to perfidy. My scrupulous regard to the privileges of flags, and a desire to avoid every thing, that partiality itself might affect to consider as a violation of them, induced me to send orders for the release of the trumpeter, before the receipt of your letter; the improper and peremptory terms of which, had it not been too late, would have strongly operated to produce a less compromising conduct. I intended at the time to assure you, and I wish it to be remembered that my indulgence in this instance is not to be drawn into precedent; and that, should any deserters from the American army hereafter have the daring folly to approach our lines in a similar manner, they will fall victims to their rashness and presumption. I shall give orders, as you request for acknowledging the receipt of your letters at the posts where they shall be delivered.

Serjeants McMahon and Cameron were taken at a distance from their party, whither they had straggled, under very exceptionable circumstances, and were confined in Lancaster Jail, on suspicion of their being spies. I have sent directions to have them conveyed to your lines, which nothing but a regard to the promise of my Aid de Camp would induce me to do, the conduct of these men having been so irregular and

criminal as to make them justly amenable to punishment. The particulars of this affair shall be the subject of future animadversion.

Before I conclude, I think it proper to inform you, that Colonel Grayson, Lieutenant-Colonels Harrison and Hamilton, and Elias Boudinot, commissary-general of prisoners, are the gentlemen appointed on my part to meet your commissioners.[1] I am, Sir, &c.

[1] "Whereas a proposition was made by me, on the 30th. day of July 1776, to His Excellency, General Sir William Howe, and acceded to by him, on the 1st. day of August following, stipulating an exchange of Prisoners 'officer for officer of equal rank, soldier for soldier, and citizen for citizen'; And whereas differences have arisen on the construction and execution of this agreement; and it has been found by experience to be inadequate to all the desirable purposes for which it was intended, not being sufficiently extensive and definite to comprehend the diversity of circumstances incident to the State of Captivity, or to ascertain the various modes of relief applicable to all:

"In order to adjust all such differences, to prevent others in future, so far as may be practicable, and to fix the exchange and accommodation of Prisoners of War, upon a more certain, liberal and ample foundation; You are, in virtue of full powers, to me delegated, to meet such commissioners of suitable rank as are, or shall be appointed on the part of General Sir William Howe, at German Town, on the last day of this month, and who shall come duly authorized to treat on this subject.

"With them to confer, determine and agree upon a Treaty and Convention for the Exchange of Prisoners of War, and for all matters whatever, which may be properly contained therein, on principles of justice humanity and mutual advantage, and agreeable to the customary rules and practice of war among civilized nations: For all which, this shall be your sufficient warrant, and your engagements being mutually interchanged, shall be ratified and confirmed by me."—*Instructions to Commissioners*, 28 March, 1778. The English commissioners were Col. Charles O'Hara, Col. Humphrey Stephens, and Capt. Richard Fitzpatrick.

"I agree with you that German Town shall be considered a neutral place during the meeting of the Commissioners, and that no troops shall be permitted to enter it while they are there, except the guards mutually sent to attend them."—*Washington to Sir William Howe*, 29 March, 1778. The commissioners met on the 31st, and Howe objecting to the American commissioners residing at Germantown during the progress of the negotiations, and Washington believing the daily return of them to camp would involve interruption, needless delay

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 24 March, 1778.

SIR,

Herewith I do myself the honor to inclose copies of a Letter from an officer[1] of Militia at Elizabeth Town to me, and an extract of a Letter from one of Mr. Boudinot's deputies, at Boston, to him; both tending to induce a belief, that the enemy have some enterprize in contemplation. What this is, time must discover. I have, this whole Winter been clearly of opinion that Genl. Howe's movements would be very early this spring to take advantage of the weak state of our army, or late, if he expected considerable reinforcements from England and meant to avail himself of his full strength.—

If the first takes places, as appearances indicate, it may I think be considered as a proof of one or both of these two things—that he is either well informed (he cannot indeed be otherwise) of the situation and more than probably the strength of our Army, or that he expects no considerable reinforcements this year from Europe.—In either case it is our indispensable duty to reinforce and arrange our army, as speedily

and much inconvenience, Newtown was fixed upon as the place of meeting, subject to the same conditions of neutrality.

"Commissioners from me are to meet others from General Howe on Monday next at Newtown, to settle a cartel for a general exchange of prisoners. During the sitting of the Commissioners none of our parties are to enter the town, and you are therefore to give immediate notice to all the officers under your command to pay strict obedience to this order. The British Commissioners will probably come part of the way on Sunday; they will be attended by an escort of horse, and care must be taken not to offer the least insult to their flag." —*Washington to General Lacey*, 4 April, 1778.

[1] Colonel Seely.

as possible, that we may in the first Instance be prepared for defence—In the second take advantage of any favorable circumstances, which may happen, to injure the enemy.—

Whatever may be the designs of Congress, with respect to the establishment of the army, I know not; but I do most earnestly and devoutly recommend a speedy adoption of them, and the appointment of officers, as our present situation at this advanced season is truly alarming, and to me highly distressing, as I am convinced that we shall be plunged into the campaign before our arrangements are made, and the army properly organized.

The numberless disadvantages, resulting from the late appointment of general officers last year, make me look forward with infinite anxiety this; for, after all the wisdom that Congress or their committee can use in the choice of officers, many will be disgusted; resignations of some and perhaps non-acceptance of others follow. Before matters then can be brought to a proper tone, much time will be lost, and a great deal of trouble and vexation encountered; to overcome which, is not the work of a day; and, till they are overcome, confusion, disorder, and loss must prevail. In the mean while, order, regularity, and discipline, which require the vigilance of every officer to establish, and must flow from the general officers in every army, is neglected or not entered upon in time to effect.[1] Thus it happened last year; and brigades

[1] "With a view of establishing uniformity of discipline and manœuvres in the army, it is in agitation to form an inspectorship distributed among different

and divisions became vacant, to the great injury of the service.

As it is not improper for Congress to have some idea of the present temper of the army, it may not be amiss to remark in this place, that, since the month of August last, between two and three hundred officers have resigned their commissions, and many others with difficulty dissuaded from it. In the Virginia line only, not less than six colonels, as good as any in the service, have left it lately; and more, I am told, are in the humor to do so.

Highly advantageous also would it be, if the recruits and draughts from No. Carolina and Virginia were not suffered to halt on their way to camp, (under pretence of getting equipp'd,) but sent forward and incorporated into the different regiments of their respective States, as soon as it could be done. Out of the number of men said to be draughted in Virginia last fall, and others from No. Carolina, very few

officers. The Baron Steuben, a Gentleman of high military rank, profound knowledge, and great experience in his profession, is placed at the head of this department. As assistants to him, four subinspectors are to be appointed, who will be charged each with the superintending a considerable part of the army. Officers to each brigade, under the title of Brigade-Inspectors are already in the execution of their office, preparing the way for ulterior instructions by perfecting their men in the first and most simple elements.

"As the office of subinspector cannot be filled with propriety but by men whose characters and abilities will give them influence and ensure their success, I would make choice of gentlemen who unite those advantages, and in my own mind have fixed upon you as one. The evident utility of this institution will, I am persuaded, engage you to undertake the office, and contribute your labors to obtain the important ends proposed. There will be an additional share of duty incident to the office, which will probably be considered in determining the emoluments; but will more especially be compensated by the respectability and honor attached to it."—*Washington to Lieutenant-Colonels Barber and Brooks*, 24 March, 1778.

TO JOHN TERNANT.[1]

[March, 1778.]

Knowing it to be the intention of Congress to employ no more foreigners except such as come under special engagements, or whose recommendations and former services speak so powerfully as scarce to leave a choice, I could not undertake to give Mr. T—— any assurance of a permanent appointment, much less the promise of Rank without authority of Congress. Nor could I stand justified upon any principle, for employing a stranger without recommendation on any other account than his profound knowledge in the business intended for him to execute. How far this is the case with Mr. T—— he alone can tell. If upon trial he should be found deficient, the folly of the undertaking would be charged equally to us both; he for undertaking what he should be found unequal to and me, for employing a Gentn. of whose capacity I had no proofs. Mr. T—— informed me that he had never been in any other service than in the Engineering department—If so I think he must be much at a loss in practice, let his theoretical knowledge be what it will; and if this should be the case would lay us both open to censure and give distrust, as it is not a very desirable thing to set aside our own officers, unless there are obvious reasons to justify the measure.

either for the purposes of offence or defence; and the fatal policy of short enlistments, like an evil genius, is now persecuting us and maiming (?) all our operations."—*Washington to Governor Livingston*, 25 March, 1778.

[1] This is in Washington's handwriting, but gives only the "substance" of the letter.

Thus much candor commands me to say, and under its influence Mr. T—— should act the duties of the office of Sub-Inspector he (if fit for the place) ought to know the pay will be about 60 dollars.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARMSTRONG.

HEAD QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
27 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I am obliged of your favors of the 8th Feb. & 10th inst.

I fear your apprehensions as to the augmentation of the army, at least in good time, will appear to have been but too well founded. Some of the States have but lately drafted their men, others have proceeded but a very little way in recruiting, and some

[1] "A French gentleman of the name of Ternant with whom I was slightly acquainted at the Cape François, is arrived in camp, and offers himself as one of the subinspectors. His talents qualify him in a superior degree for the office. He has travelled so much as to have worn off the characteristic manners of his nation, and he speaks our language uncommonly well. The baron is very desirous of having him as an assistant, and says he is persuaded he will be an acquisition to the States. The only thing against him is, that he comes without recommendatory letters. The Congress have I think very wisely resolved against employing any more foreigners unless they are forced to it by the special contracts of their embassadors, or very pointed recommendations. On this account the General has, in order that the baron might not lose so good an assistant, put the matter upon this footing: that Mr. Ternant may exercise the office of subinspector without rank for the present; and that when his practical abilities are as well known as his theoretical, Congress will determine a rank suitable to his merit."—*John Laurens to his father*, 25 March, 1778.

"I was favored with your letter yesterday. As you seem to have taken it for granted, that your services are rejected, and intimate an inconsistency in my not discouraging from the beginning the application made in your behalf, it is incumbent upon me to assure you, that I have not given up the idea of your becoming one of the sub-inspectors, on the terms expressed in my last letter,

have not yet fixed upon the mode of completing their regiments. Even those men, that are already drafted or enlisted, are to be drawn together, most of them probably to be inoculated and all of them to be disciplined. By accounts from the eastward, the troops are about evacuating Rhode Island, and two regiments of Hessians and two of British are actually embarked at New York, whether with an intent to form some new expedition, or to reinforce General Howe at Philadelphia, cannot yet be determined, but I think the latter most probable. If General Howe draws his strength together before we have collected ours, nothing can hinder him from moving against us but ignorance of our numbers; and I dont think we have any right to count upon that, considering the knowledge he appears to have had the last campaign.[1]

and acceded to by you; and, consequently, that the want of consistency depends upon your interpretation of some part of my conduct towards you.

"I will not however conceal from you, that, foreseeing some difficulties in the way, I declined announcing your appointment precipitately, and before the other sub-inspectors were chosen, that the whole might be declared at the same time. Having now in my own mind fixed upon these gentlemen, though all of them are not in camp, I have not the smallest objection to your entering upon the duties of the office, as I am persuaded it will afford much relief to Baron Steuben and benefit the service."—*Washington to Ternant*, 26 March, 1778.

[1] In view of this transfer of troops from New York, Washington conceived that an attack upon that city by the troops under McDougall would be feasible and promise success. On consulting with Governor Clinton and General Parsons, it was the opinion of General McDougall that the enterprise was not practicable. "The condition and strength of these posts," he replied, "utterly forbid it, especially when the consequence of a misfortune in the attempt is duly considered, as it may affect the supplies to your army, and the general influence such an event may have on the operations of the campaign."—Fishkill, April 13th.

"The practicability of the enterprise mentioned in mine of the 31st ultimo will depend entirely upon circumstances, and must be still, as it was then, left

I shall say no more of the Canada expedition, than that it is at an end. I never was made acquainted with a single circumstance relating to it.

I do not yet know what provision will be made for the officers who will be supernumerary upon the new arrangement of the army. I am in hopes that there will not be any great number of them, there having been so many resignations of late that the Regiments are in general thinly officered.

I am fully of opinion, that the enemy depend as much or more upon our own divisions, and the disaffection which they expect to create by sending their emissaries among the people, than they do by the force of their arms. The situation of matters in this State is melancholy and alarming. We have daily proof, that a majority of the people in this quarter are only restrained from supplying the enemy with horses and every kind of necessary, through fear of punishment; and, although I have made a number of severe examples, I cannot put a stop to the intercourse. It is plain from several late instances, that they have their emissaries in every part of the country. A lieutenant has been detected in Lancaster county purchasing horses, in conjunction with the inhabitants, one of whom and the lieutenant have been executed. Four fine teams were

to your own good judgment, and that of the gentlemen with whom I desired you to consult. The sending of Van Schaick's regiment must also depend upon the intelligence you receive from New York. If you find that the enemy are not in a situation to make an attempt upon you, but still too strong for you to attempt any thing against them with a probability of success, I would have you in that case send the regiment forward as quick as possible."—*Washington to McDougall*, 8 April, 1778.

taken a few days ago, going into Philadelphia from the neighborhood of Yorktown, and I doubt not but there are many more such intentions yet undiscovered. I am convinced that more mischief has been done by the British officers, who have been prisoners, than by any other set of people; during their captivity they have made connexions in the country, they have confirmed the disaffected, converted many ignorant people, and frightened the lukewarm and timid by their stories of the power of Britain. I hope a general exchange is not far off, by which means we shall get rid of that set of people; and I am convinced, that we had better, in future, send all officers in upon parole, than keep them among us.

If the state of General Potter's affairs will admit of returning to the army, I shall be exceedingly glad to see him, as his activity and vigilance have been much wanting in the course of the winter. The quota of militia, stipulated by the State, has never been above half kept up, and sometimes I believe there has not been a single man. General Lacey has not now above seventy. The country upon the east side of Schuylkill has been by these means exceedingly exposed, as it has not been in my power to cover it with the effective Continental troops, who instead of relaxation have been upon fatigue the whole winter.

When the weather is such, that you think you can take the field without injury to your health, I shall be glad to see you with the army, as I am, with sincere regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO PATRICK HENRY.

VALLEY FORGE, 27 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR;

About eight days ago I was honored with your favor of the 20th ultimo. Your friendship, Sir, in transmitting to me the anonymous letter you had received, lays me under the most grateful obligations, and if my acknowledgments can be due for any thing more, it is for the polite and delicate terms in which you have been pleased to communicate the matter.

I have ever been happy in supposing that I had a place in your esteem, and the proof you have afforded on this occasion makes me peculiarly so. The favorable light in which you hold me is truly flattering; but I should feel much regret, if I thought the happiness of America so intimately connected with my personal welfare, as you so obligingly seem to consider it. All I can say is, that she has ever had, and I trust she ever will have, my honest exertions to promote her interest. I cannot hope that my services have been the best; but my heart tells me they have been the best that I could render.

That I may have erred in using the means in my power for accomplishing the objects of the arduous, exalted station with which I am honored, I cannot doubt; nor do I wish my conduct to be exempted from reprehension farther than it may deserve. Error is the portion of humanity, and to censure it, whether committed by this or that public character, is the prerogative of freemen. However, being intimately acquainted with the man I conceive to be the author

of the letter transmitted, and having always received from him the strongest professions of attachment and regard, I am constrained to consider him as not possessing, at least, a great degree of candor and sincerity, though his views in addressing you should have been the result of conviction, and founded in motives of public good. This is not the only secret, insidious attempt, that has been made to wound my reputation. There have been others equally base, cruel, and ungenerous, because conducted with as little frankness, and proceeding from views, perhaps, as personally interested. I am, dear Sir, with great esteem and regard, your much obliged friend, &c.

TO PATRICK HENRY.

CAMP, 28 March, 1778.

DEAR SIR;

Just as I was about to close my letter of yesterday, your favor of the 5th instant came to hand. I can only thank you again, in the language of the most undissembled gratitude, for your friendship; and assure you, that the indulgent disposition, which Virginia in particular, and the States in general, entertain towards me, gives me the most sensible pleasure. The approbation of my country is what I wish; and, as far as my abilities and opportunities will permit, I hope I shall endeavor to deserve it. It is the highest reward to a feeling mind; and happy are they, who so conduct themselves as to merit it.

The anonymous letter, with which you were pleased to favor me, was written by Dr. Rush, so far as I can

judge from a similitude of hands. This man has been elaborate and studied in his professions of regard for me; and long since the letter to you. My caution to avoid any thing, which could injure the service, prevented me from communicating, but to a very few of my friends, the intrigues of a faction, which I know was formed against me, since it might serve to publish our internal dissensions; but their own restless zeal to advance their views has too clearly betrayed them, and made concealment on my part fruitless. I cannot precisely mark the extent of their views, but it appeared in general, that General Gates was to be exalted on the ruin of my reputation and influence. This I am authorized to say, from undeniable facts in my own possession, from publications, the evident scope of which could not be mistaken, and from private detractions industriously circulated. General Mifflin, it is commonly supposed, bore the second part in the cabal; and General Conway, I know, was a very active and malignant partisan; but I have good reasons to believe, that their machinations have recoiled most sensibly upon themselves. With sentiments of great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, your affectionate humble servant.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
31 March, 1778.

SIR,—

It is some time since I have been honored with a letter from you. The sole reason of my taking up your attention at this time is to lay before you a short

state of our present situation, the apparent views of the enemy, and from thence to show the absolute necessity which there is for drawing our force together as quick as possible, and being able to take the field before the enemy are in a condition to begin their operations. Notwithstanding the orders I had given last year to have all the recruits inoculated, I found, upon examination, that between three and four thousand men had not had the small pox; that disorder began to make its appearance in camp, and to avoid its spreading in the natural way, the whole army [was] immediately inoculated. They have gone through with uncommon success, but are not yet sufficiently recovered to do duty. All the men of the eastern regiments who were drafted for eight and twelve months were discharged in the winter, and their places have not yet been filled up. Seven of the Virginia regiments had been enlisted for two years; and their time of service expiring about two months ago, they were discharged likewise. Full two thousand men belonging to the different States are returned unfit for duty, for want of clothing, and must consequently be deducted from the effective list, from which also are to be taken the sick present and in hospital. From the above you may form a pretty just estimation of our present force,—I mean with which we should be able to look the enemy in the face.

General Howe has already drawn a body of men, said to be two thousand five hundred, from New York, and several accounts from Rhode Island speak

confidently of the intended evacuation of New Port, which I suppose, if it takes place, is also to reinforce Philadelphia. These things indicate the intention of an early movement on the part of the enemy, and indeed, if they have the least penetration, or have profited by past experience, they must know that an early campaign upon their part will be highly advantageous to them. Had they attacked us last spring, in the neighborhood of Morris Town before our levies joined, they would undoubtedly have routed us, and perhaps have hindered us from making a junction of any consequence during the remainder of the campaign.

After the foregoing, little need be said to convince you of the absolute necessity of sending forward your levies with the greatest expedition. They are wanted now to enable us to act merely on the defensive; but would the States exert themselves and send such a body of men into the field, before the enemy are fully reinforced, as would enable us to act upon the offensive, such advantages might be taken of them in their present situation, and such posts occupied as would reduce them to the greatest distress. We may be assured that, notwithstanding the severe blow which Great Britain met with in the loss of Burgoyne's army, she will exert herself most strenuously to repair her credit this campaign. It is plain that France is playing a politic game, enjoying all the advantages of our commerce without the expense of war. It will probably end in a rupture between the two courts, but perhaps not so speedily as some imagine.

Such of the levies as have not been inoculated need not be detained on that account. We have found it more convenient to inoculate them in and near camp. They can be of service in case of emergency, and are not to be subjected to a long march immediately upon their recovery, which has always been much more fatal than the disorder.

Among the troops returned unfit for duty for want of clothing, none of your State are included. The care of your legislature in providing clothing and necessaries of all kinds for their men is highly laudable, and reflects the greatest honor upon their patriotism and humanity.

I wrote to you the 6th ultimo upon our then want of provisions, to which having received no answer, I am doubtful of the letters getting to hand. We have been since better supplied, and as I am informed that Mr. Wadsworth has accepted of the commissary department, I hope that we shall do better in future. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THOMAS McKEAN.[1]

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
1 April, 1778.

SIR:

I was yesterday favored with your letter of the 13th March—I should be ready to afford every probable means of procuring honest testimony to the two persons now under confinement for passing counterfeit Continental money. But it cannot be supposed

[1] Chief-Justice of Pennsylvania.

that General Howe would permit persons to come out Philada. to give evidence in a matter, which by being traced fairly back would fix the issuing counterfeit money upon some of his own party—a thing which he has affected to treat as not having the least foundation in truth. Besides I very much doubt whether, he would not consider the suffering persons to come out to give evidence in our Courts, as in some measure acknowledging their authority and jurisdiction, which he has ever cautiously avoided.

Upon the whole Sir, I think it will be to no purpose to send in for the evidence required, who if they were permitted to come out would only endeavor to make it appear, that the prisoners did not know the money was counterfeit; whether they did or did not I should suppose the Jury would be able to Judge from circumstances. I am, &c.

TO COLONEL JOSIAS C. HALL.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 3 April, 1778.

SIR,

However painful it is to me to signify my public disapprobation of a sentence solemnly pronounced by a court-martial, it is a disagreeable sensation from which my duty forbids me to exempt myself in particular instances; such a one is that, which makes the subject of your favor of the 26th ultimo. A refusal to obey the commands of a superior officer, especially where the duty required was evidently calculated for the good of the service, cannot be justified, without involving consequences subversive of all mil-

itary discipline. A precedent manifestly too dangerous would be established, of dispensing with orders, and subordination would be at an end, if men's ideas were not rectified in a case of this kind, and such notice taken, as has been on my part.

As far as the matter personally regards you, I feel additional concern; but I can by no means discover that necessity of retiring from the service in support of a mistaken opinion, which you remotely hint at. On the contrary, from the crisis at which our affairs have arrived, and the frequent defection of officers seduced by views of private interest and emolument to abandon the cause of their country, I think every man, who does not merely make profession of patriotism, is bound by indissoluble ties to remain in the army. My advice, in which I flatter myself you will coincide, after a dispassionate review of this matter, is, therefore, that differences may be mutually forgot, and that the whole may subside; to which your love of the service will I hope in no small degree contribute, and I am, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
4 April, 1778.

SIR,

I have now the honor to acknowledge your several letters of the 21st, 29th, and 30th ultimo, with their

[1] Colonel Hall had written: "Whatever your Excellency's determination may be, I shall submit to it without repining, because it will be dictated by candor, and calculated for the benefit of the service. If I should be under the necessity of retiring, though confined to a narrower sphere of action, still a deep sense of duty, and a warm attachment to the liberties of my country, shall be my leading principles, and no personal injury shall ever induce me to forget the great obligations due to society."

enclosures, which have been duly received. It gives me pain to observe they appear to contain several implications by which my sensibility is not a little wounded. I find myself extremely embarrassed by the steps I had taken towards an exchange of prisoners, and the formation of a general cartel making more ample provision for their future accommodation and relief. The views of Congress seem to be very different from what I supposed them, when I entered into my late engagements with General Howe. Their resolution of the 30th ultimo, pointedly requiring a strict adherence to all former ones upon the subject, will in all probability render them impracticable. I considered some of their resolutions as dictated on the principle of retaliation, and did not imagine the terms they contained would be insisted upon in negotiating an agreement calculated to remedy the evils which occasioned them. In most respects they might be substantially complied with; but there are some points to which an exact conformity must of necessity destroy the idea of a cartel. One is the obliging of the enemy to pay gold and silver on equal terms for Continental currency, estimating the articles supplied them at their actual prices with us, as seems to be the design of the resolve of the 19th of December; another is, that, subjecting the inhabitants of these States, taken in arms against them, to trial and punishment, agreeable to the resolve of the 30th of the same month.

I am well aware that appearances ought to be upheld, and that we should avoid as much as possible

recognising by any public act the depreciation of our currency; but I conceive this end would be answered, as far as might be necessary, by stipulating, that all money payments should be made in gold and silver, being the common medium of commerce among nations, at the rate of four shillings and six pence for a Spanish milled dollar; by fixing the price of rations on an equitable scale relatively to our respective circumstances; and providing for the payment of what we may owe, by sending in provision and selling it at their market. The rates of money, and the prices of provisions and other commodities, differ everywhere; and, in treaties of a similar nature between any two States, it is requisite, for mutual convenience, to ascertain some common ratio, for both the value of money in payments, and for the rates of those articles on which they may arise.

It was determined on mature consideration not to conclude any thing expressly, that should contradict the resolution of the 30th of December; but at the same time, if it is designed to be the rule of practice, it is easy to perceive it would at once overturn any cartel that could be formed. General Howe would never consent to observe it on his part, if such a practice were to exist on ours. Though the law ought not to be contravened by an express article admitting the exchangeability of such persons, yet, if it is not suffered to sleep, it is in vain to expect the operation of it will be acquiesced in by the enemy.[1]

[1] This point is so clear, that the ground taken by Congress, and adhered to with pertinacity, seems very extraordinary. By the resolution of the 30th of

The measures I have taken must evince, that it is my determination to pay the fullest attention to the interests of citizens, and to the rights of General Lee, in the treaty; and I think it but justice to the gentlemen appointed to negotiate it to declare, that I know them to be so fully impressed with the importance of both those objects, as to make them cheerfully observant of the injunctions of Congress, so far as not to conclude any agreement, of which the exchange of General Lee and the alternative respecting citizens are not essential parts. These points have been early determined on.

It is with no small concern, that I have been obliged to trouble Congress upon the subjects of this letter; and, should they appear to them in the same light they do to me, and they should think proper to remove the obstacles, which now oppose the business in hand, I must request they will be pleased to communicate their determination as expeditiously as possible, that the commissioners may govern themselves accordingly, and either proceed to forming a cartel, or put an end to the negotiation. Before the resolves of the 30th came to hand, they had met, and been in treaty two days, with a prospect of a favorable accommodation.

December, all loyalists, or Americans in the British service, who should be taken in arms, were to be sent to the respective States to which they belonged, and suffer the penalties inflicted by the laws of such States upon traitors. Such a resolution was an effectual bar to any agreement for a general exchange. The British commander was as much bound in honor and justice to protect these persons, as he was to protect the British officers or soldiers; and in some respects more so, inasmuch as they had made greater sacrifices in supporting the cause of the king.—*Sparks.*

I am happy to inform Congress, that General Lee will be out on parole to-morrow in place of General Prescott; and I have every reason to expect, if the negotiation can be continued upon admissible terms, that his exchange will immediately follow the release-ment of Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers. It is agreed, that Lieutenant-Colonel Allen shall be exchanged for Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell.

The importunate applications of Colo. Lee[1] and Maj: Swazey[2] to leave the Service oblige me to lay the matter before Congress. Colo. Lee's letter upon the subject was transmitted me the 25th of January, but hoping he might change his mind I deferred writing to Congress upon his request. He has renewed it again in urgent terms thro' General Heath, and I have only to observe that it is a painful circumstance to see officers of their merit leaving the Service. It is the case every day. I shall be obliged by Congress informing me of the dates of the Resignations of the Colonels in the Virginia line. I have only received the date of Colo. Lewis's.

Inclosed is a letter from Capt. Cottineau of the Ship Ferdinand with an Invoice of her cargo. The letter only came to hand yesterday, and as it is of an old date it is highly probable that the goods are sold. If they are not, from the Captain's desire to give the public a preference in the Sale, Congress will have an opportunity of directing them to be purchased. Most of them would be proper for the Army. I have the honor to be, &c.

[1] Col. William R. Lee.

[2] Major Joseph Swasey.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 10 April, 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving your favor of the 4th Instant, enclosing a resolve of Congress of the same date, empowering me to call forth five thousand militia from the States of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. I thank Congress for the power; at the same time it is incumbent on me to assure them, that, granting the practicability of collecting such a number, it would prove a work of time, difficulty, and expense; to evince which, I need only recur to the experience of last campaign on similar occasions, and to remind you that it was not possible to obtain 1,000 men, nor sometimes even one hundred, from this State, altho' the former number was required and promised, for the purpose of covering during the winter the country between Schuylkill & Delaware.

As this resolve appears to have been made in consequence of my Letters of the 24th and 29th Ulto. which were founded on conjecture, and in some degree misinformation, and as the execution of it would, exclusive of the inconveniences above mentioned, I am persuaded, have a tendency to injure the completion of the Continental Regiments, I shall call for a small part only of the number allowed; but could wish that Hartley's Regiment were ordered immediately to camp, and the duties of it performed by militia—In like manner I would propose that all remote guards should be composed of militia—and that the several purposes for which men are drawn from

the Continental Troops should be answered by them. This would be a means of drawing together a considerable number of men, who are in a manner lost to the Army; and of employing the militia to the best advantage possible—

The great end of my letter to Congress, of the 24th ultimo, seems to have been mistaken. My views were not turned to reinforcements of militia. To know whether the old establishment of the army, or the new as agreed upon by the committee, is the choice of Congress, and in what manner the regiments of this State and the additionals are to be reduced, officers for the whole appointed, &c, were my objects. These are objects of the greatest moment, as they may, in their consequences, involve the fate of America; for I will undertake to say, that it is next to impossible, when the season is so far advanced, properly to accomplish those changes, appointments, and the dependent arrangements for the ensuing campaign. Should any convulsion happen, or movement take place, they will be altogether impracticable. Justice to my own character, as well as duty to the public, constrain me to repeat these things; their consequences are more easily conceived than described.

It may be said by some, Sir, that my wish to see the officers of this army upon a more respectable establishment is the cause of my solicitude, and carrys me too far. To such I can declare, that my anxiety proceeds from the causes above mentioned. If my opinion is asked with respect to the necessity

of making this provision for the officers, I am ready to declare, that I do most religiously believe the salvation of the cause depends upon it, and, without it, your officers will moulder to nothing, or be composed of low and illiterate men, void of capacity for this or any other business. To prove this, I can with truth aver, that scarce a day passes without the offer of two or three commissions; and my advices from the Eastward and Southward are, that numbers who had gone home on furlough mean not to return, but are establishing themselves in more lucrative employments. Let Congress determine what will be the consequence of this spirit.

Personally, as an officer, I have no interest in their decision, because I have declared, and I now repeat it, that I never will receive the smallest benefit from the half-pay establishment; but, as a man who fights under the weight of a proscription, and as a citizen, who wishes to see the liberty of his country established upon a permanent foundation, and whose property depends upon the success of our arms, I am deeply interested. But, all this apart, and justice out of the question, upon the single ground of economy and public saving, I will maintain the utility of it; for I have not the least doubt, that, until officers consider their commissions in an honorable and interested point of view, and are afraid to endanger them by negligence and inattention, that no order, regularity, or care, either of the men or Public property, will prevail. To prove this, I need only refer to the General Courts-Martial, which are constantly sitting for the trial of them,

and the number who have been cashiered within the last three months for misconduct of different kinds.

By officers who are just returned from Massachusetts bay, I learn that there is not the least prospect of getting men from thence before the Month of June—if then—and indeed, that there is no reason to expect any number that will deserve the name of re-inforcement for the Continental Regiments this Campaign; the Towns being only called upon to furnish the deficiency of their last years quota, so that all subsequent casualties are disregarded, and the fifteen Regiments of that State which may now perhaps want 4000 men to compleat them, will receive only 500 if the Towns came within that number of their complement last year—What change the requisition of Congress of the — Feby. may effect I shall not undertake to say—if it has not a speedy and powerful operation our prospects in that quarter will be exceedingly unpromising—A Gentleman from New Hampshire some little time since informed me that matters were nearly in the same train there, notwithstanding a resolve for the completion of their Battalions—and, the Inclosed copy of a Letter No. 1 from General Putnam, whom I have desired to remain in Connecticut for some time in order to forward the Recruits from that State conveys his Ideas of what may be expected from thence.—What New York, New Jersey, No. Carolina have done, or are about to do, I know not. Pennsylvania and Maryland have tried the effect of voluntary inlistments to little purpose and the first, in direct contradiction to

the most pointed injunctions laid on the officers, have their Recruits composed chiefly of Deserters who will embrace the first opportunity of escaping with our Arms—Virginia, it is true, has proceeded to a draught; but the number, besides being in itself inadequate, has been lessened by desertion and the deficiency of the Regiments on the other hand, being increased by death and desertion, their strength will probably fall very far short of the new establishment.

This Sir is not a flattering Picture of our affairs, but the representation is just, and it is incumbent on me to exhibit it in my own defence, as notwithstanding all these unfavorable circumstances (and what is to me a certain prospect of being plunged into the campaign before our arrangements are made—Officers appointed, &c?) great matters I perceive are expected from our activity this Spring—in proportion therefore will the disappointment be felt, by those who are sanguine—For want of the ratification of Congress, the horse establishment—companies of Sappers, Provost Marshalsey &c. &c. as agreed to by the Committee, and recommended for their consideration, are entirely at a stand, at a time when we ought to be deriving benefits from their execution. At no period since the commencement of the war have I felt more painful sensations on account of delay, than at the present; and, urged by them, I have expressed myself without reserve.

By a letter just received from General Weedon, I am informed of his intention to resign, if General Woodford should be restored to his former Rank,

which he had not then heard. General Muhlenberg is now balancing on the same point. One, therefore, if not two brigadiers, will be wanted for that State. The disadvantages resulting from the frequent resignations in the Virginia Line, the change of commanding officers to the regiments, and other causes equally distressing, have injured that corps beyond conception, and have been the means of reducing very respectable regiments in some instances to a mere handful of men; and this will ever be the case, till officers can be fixed by something equivalent to the sacrifice they make. To reason otherwise, and suppose that public virtue alone will enable men to forego the ease and comforts of life, to encounter the hardships and dangers of war for a bare subsistence, when their companions and friends are amassing large fortunes, is viewing human nature rather as it should be, than as it really is.

The clothier-genl of the army, as well as the heads of every other department, should be in camp near the Com'r-in-chief; otherwise it is impossible that the operations of war can be conducted with energy and precision.[1] I wish most sincerely that this, as not the

[1] To a draft of a letter addressed to James Mease, Clothier-General, Washington added the following in his own hand:

"In a word your absence and the incompetency of a clerk to answer the various applications that are daily making, throws a load of business upon me which ought to be the burthen of your own shoulders, and which were you present you would become more intimately acquainted with and know how to provide for. For these reasons if you mean to continue in the office, I am obliged to insist that you shall reside with the army. . . .

"I cannot get as much cloth as will make cloaths for my servants, notwithstanding one of them that attends my person and table is indecently and most shamefully naked, and my frequent application to Mr. Kemper (which he says

least essential part of the business settled with the committee, were decided, and a thorough investigation were had into the conduct of this department, as it is a matter of universal astonishment that we should be deficient in any article of cloathing when it is commonly asserted that the Eastern States alone can furnish materials enough to cloath 100,000 men —If this be fact there is a fatal error somewhere, to which may be attributed the death, & desertion, of thousands.

I shall make no apology for the freedom of this letter. To inform Congress of such facts as materially affect the service, I conceive to be one great and essential part of my duty to them and myself. My agreement with the committee entitled me to expect upwards of forty thousand Continental troops, exclusive of artillery and Horse, for the Service of the ensuing campaign, including those to be employed in the defence of the North River. Instead of these, what are my prospects?

Major-General the Marquis de Lafayette is arrived at camp, and will resume the command of his division. The Baron de Kalb is expected in a few days. * * *[1]

he has often transmitted to you) in the course of the last two months. I can easily, under such an instance as this, give a credence to the complaints of others when they assert that no attention is paid to their wants."—17th April, 1778.

[1] Read in Congress, April 13th. Referred to Duer, Chase, and Dana.

When it was reported that the British intended suddenly to evacuate Rhode Island, to draw part of their force from New York, and to attack with this combined strength the Continental army, Congress empowered Washington to call in five thousand militia from the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. The power was not exercised, and it was suggested that the militia thus at command could be used in an attack on Philadelphia. "I know it is a very

TO COLONEL MATHIAS OGDEN.

VALLEY FORGE, 13 April, 1778.

DR. SIR:

I received your favor of the 9th Inst, by Colo. Barber.

The liberation of our Officers from their confinement, is certainly a desirable object, yet I am not satisfied, that we could fully justify our conduct in effecting it in the manner proposed. But, be this as it may, it appears to me, that the attempt, supposing it to succeed, would not be founded in principles of a large and general expediency.—It would afford relief to a few men, and subject a far greater number, perhaps ten times as many, to the inconveniences of a stricter and much more limited confinement, than they now experience. Our officers in the hands of the enemy, are permitted to be on Long Island thro' favor, and for their better accommodation. If we, by an attempt, should release twenty or thirty, every indulgence would be withdrawn from those remaining and they, and all future Prisoners would be so closely and uncomfortably placed, that they would not be liable to the same accidents. Besides, a breach of Honor would certainly be objected against the of-

favorite scheme with many not acquainted with the situation of our magazines, and the deranged state of the two capital departments of Commissary and Quarter Master General, which have not yet resumed a proper tone, to draw together a great Body of militia in addition to our continental force, and make an attack upon the enemy in Philadelphia. However much a measure of this kind is to be wished, two capital obstacles render it totally ineligable at present —the want of Provisions (or means of transportation) and the uncertainty both with respect to time and numbers of obtaining the Recruits for the Continental Regiments."—*Washington to Governor Johnson*, 11 May. 1778.

ficers released; for it would be said, right or wrong, that they, at least, had consented to the measure, if not planned it. These considerations, without taking into view how far the proceeding would be justifiable, are opposed to the scheme and induced me to decline it. Were it to be prosecuted, I certainly should have no objections to your conducting it. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 18 April, 1778.

SIR,

On Thursday evening I had the honor to receive your two letters of the 14th instant. I am much obliged by the fresh assurances, which Congress are pleased to make me of their confidence; and they may be satisfied that I wish nothing more ardently, than that a good and perfect agreement should subsist between us. The negotiation between the commissioners is ended without effecting a cartel; nor do I suppose, from the information I have received on the subject, that there is any good prospect that one will ever be formed, or at least for a great while, on a liberal and an extensive plan. A report of the proceedings of the commissioners on our part, at their several meetings, I take the liberty to enclose. * * * The old agreement, I presume, continues; and under it we must carry on exchanges.[1]

[1] The commissioners met again April 6th, at Newtown, in Bucks County. A difficulty arose at the outset concerning the nature of the powers contained in General Howe's commission. It was given on no other authority than his own, whereas the commission from General Washington expressly specified, that it

General Muhlenberg has communicated his determination to resign, but has promised not to leave his brigade till Congress shall appoint another general in his room, provided it is done in any reasonable time. By postponing my call upon the militia, as mentioned in my last of the 10th, I did not mean to decline it altogether. I did not see the necessity of calling out five thousand for the sole purpose of defence; and in the present situation of things, I cannot perceive my way sufficiently clear for offensive measures, as I do not know when to expect the recruits from the different States, nor what prospect the commissary has of provision; as we only get it yet from hand to mouth, assembling the militia, unless for the purpose of defence, should be the last thing done, as they soon become impatient, and are very expensive in the articles of stores, camp utensils, provisions, &c.

The enclosed draft of a bill was brought to headquarters yesterday afternoon, by a gentleman who

was "in virtue of full powers to him delegated." This defect was objected to by the American commissioners, and the subject was referred to General Howe, who declined altering the commission, declaring at the same time, "that he meant the treaty to be of a personal nature, founded on the mutual confidence and honor of the contracting generals, and had no intention, either of binding the nation, or extending the cartel beyond the limits and duration of his own command." As this was putting the matter on a totally different footing from that contemplated in General Washington's commission, by which Congress and the nation were bound, and as General Howe's commissioners refused to treat on any other terms, the meeting was dissolved, without any progress having been made in a cartel. It was intimated by the British commissioners, as a reason why General Howe declined to negotiate on a national ground, that it might imply an acknowledgment inconsistent with the claims of the English government. The papers, which passed between the commissioners of the two parties, were published by order of Congress.—See *Remembrancer*, vol. vi., p. 315.

informed me, that a large cargo of them had been just sent out of Philadelphia. Whether this insidious proceeding is genuine, and imported in the packet, which arrived a few days ago, or contrived in Philadelphia, is a point undetermined and immaterial; but it is certainly founded in principles of the most wicked, diabolical baseness, meant to poison the minds of the people, and detach the wavering at least from our cause.[1] I suppose it will obtain a place in the papers,

[1] "When I addressed you on the 18th, I was doubtful whether the draft of the bill then transmitted was not spurious and contrived in Philadelphia; but its authenticity, I am almost certain is not to be questioned. The information from Philadelphia seems clear and conclusive, that it came over in the packet, with Lord North's speech on the introduction of it into Parliament. I enclose a paper containing his speech, which just came to hand. This bill, I am persuaded, will pass into a law. Congress will perceive by the minister's speech, that it aims at objects of the greatest extent and importance, and will no doubt in one way or other involve the most interesting consequences to this country." —*Washington to the President of Congress*, 20 April, 1778.

This was a reasonable supposition, as the British were then circulating other forged papers with a view to introduce dissensions in the Congress and in the army of America. On the 18th of April, Washington wrote to Laurens: "Among the many villainous arts practised by the enemy to create distrust, that of forging letters for me is one," referring to the spurious letters already printed in this collection under their respective dates. About the same time a forged article, purporting to be two resolves of Congress, had been published by the British, with all the formalities of place, date, and the signatures of the president and secretary, and declaring in substance, that, whereas the mode adopted by many of the States for filling up their quotas, by enlistment and drafts for six and nine months, was found to produce constant fluctuation in the numbers of the army and want of discipline, it was resolved that all the troops then in the army, and such as must afterwards be enlisted or drafted, should be deemed troops of the United States during the war, and that General Washington and other commanding officers were required to apprehend and punish as deserters all who should leave the army under pretence of their terms of service being expired. These spurious resolves were dated February 20th. They may be found in Hugh Gaine's *New York Gazette*, of the 9th of March.

"Can you conceive any thing equal to the shifts and stratagems of the British ministry? If we conduct our affairs with firmness and wisdom, we must do well. The "Resolution," so called in Towne's paper, must be an arrant forgery, as I never had the least intimation of it; and to suppose such a one

and am not without anxiety that it will have a malignant influence. I would submit it, whether it will not be highly expedient for Congress to investigate it in all its parts, and to expose in the most striking manner the injustice, delusion, and fraud it contains. I trust it will be attacked, in every shape, in every part of the continent.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

could have passed, is to suppose almost the existence of an impossibility. The forgery is calculated for the most wicked purposes, to excite an opposition in the people to the measures for drafting, and to render them ineffectual. There is nothing the enemy will not attempt, to carry their ends.

"The only proceedings of Congress, for drafting, that I have seen, were passed on the 26th of February, and are a recommendation to the several States, 'to fill up their respective regiments by drafts from the militia, to serve nine months after they appear at the places appointed for their rendezvous, dischargeable before the end of that period, in proportion as recruits, enlisted for three years or during the war, may join the regiments in which they are.' What a contrast between these proceedings and the forgery! I shall transmit the paper to Congress immediately, that they may pursue proper steps for counteracting this wicked publication."—*Washington to Governor Livingston*, 22 April, 1778.

[1] The paper here referred to contained a draft of Lord North's *Conciliatory Bills*, as they were called. They had made their way with quick despatch to General Washington's camp. They arrived in New York on the 14th of April, and were published on the 15th by Governor Tryon, accompanied by a declaration certifying that they were genuine copies of the drafts sent to him by Lord George Germaine. He added: "To prepare the way for the return of peace, the above bills were read in the House of Commons on the 19th day of February last, in pursuance of unanimous resolve of the House on the 17th of the same month; and I have his Majesty's command to cause them to be printed and dispersed, that the people at large may be acquainted with their contents, and with the favorable disposition of Great Britain towards the American colonies." Lord North's speech, on presenting the bills to Parliament, was likewise published at the same time. None of these particulars had come to General Washington's knowledge, when he wrote the above letter. From the manner in which he speaks of the bills, as well as from his next letter to Congress, it is evident that he considered them a forgery at the time he was writing. Nor was he singular in this opinion. Mr. Laurens, President of Congress, in a letter to Governor Clinton, said: "I differ from gentlemen, who suppose the performance originated under authority in England. It appears to me to be destitute of the most essential marks. I believe it to be of Philadelphia manufacture, probably under hints from the other side of the water."—*MS. Letter*, April 20th.

[2] Read in Congress, April 20th. Referred to G. Morris, Drayton, and Dana.

TO THE GENERAL OFFICERS IN CAMP.

HE.-QUARTERS, 20 April, 1778.

SIR,

There seem to me but three general plans of operation, which may be premeditated for the next campaign; one, the attempting to recover Philadelphia and destroy the enemy's army there; another, the endeavoring to transfer the war to the northward by an enterprise against New York; and a third, the remaining quiet in a secure, fortified camp, disciplining and arranging the army till the enemy begin their operations, and then to govern ourselves accordingly. Which of these three plans shall we adopt?

If the first, what mode of execution shall we pursue, and what force will be requisite, estimating the present numbers of the enemy in Philadelphia to be ten thousand men, exclusive of marines and seamen, whose aid may be called in? Shall we endeavor to effect the purpose by storm, by regular approaches, or by blockade, and in what particular manner?

If the second, shall we attempt to take New York by a *coup de main* with a small force, or shall we collect a large force, and make an attack in form? In either case, what force will be necessary, estimating the number of the enemy in and about New York at four thousand men, and what disposition shall we make so as to effect the enterprise, and at the same time to protect the country here and secure our stores?

If the last, what post shall we take, so as to keep the army in a state of security, to afford cover to the country and to our magazines, and to be in a situation to counteract the future motions of the enemy?

The Commander-in-chief thinks it unnecessary to make any comments on these questions, as the general officers will no doubt fully weigh every circumstance proper to be considered, and, sensible of the importance of the objects, to which their attention is called, will make their opinions the result of mature deliberation.

I am, &c.[1]

[1] Each of the officers sent a written reply to the above queries. They differed widely in opinion. Wayne, Paterson, and Maxwell recommended an

TO JOHN BANISTER, DELEGATE IN CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 21 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

On Saturday evening I had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 16th instant.

I thank you very much for your obliging tender of a friendly intercourse between us; and you may rest assured that I embrace it with cheerfulness, and shall write you freely, as often as leisure will permit, of such points as appear to me material and interesting. I am pleased to find, that you expect the proposed establishment of the army will succeed; though is it a painful consideration, that matters of such pressing importance and obvious necessity meet with so much

attack on Philadelphia. Knox, Poor, Varnum, and Muhlenberg were in favor of an attack on New York. Greene thought it best for the main body of the army to remain at Valley Forge, but that an attack should be made on New York by a detachment of four thousand regulars, joined to the eastern militia; that General Washington should command this expedition in person, and leave General Lee to command in Pennsylvania. Lord Stirling was for operating against both New York and Philadelphia. Lafayette, Steuben, and Duportail had doubts as to the expediency of any attack upon the enemy, till the army should be strengthened and put in a better condition; and they were inclined to adopt the third plan suggested by the Commander-in-chief.

This letter was sent as a circular to all the general officers in camp. General Greene had been appointed quartermaster-general, on the 2d of March, but he retained his rank of major-general in the army.

In calling for advice Washington appears to have anticipated by a day an order of Congress on the same subject; that "General Washington be authorized and directed forthwith to convene a council of the major generals in the state of Pennsylvania, and the general officer commanding the corps of engineers, and with the advice of said council to form such a plan for the general operations of the campaign as he shall deem consistent with the welfare of these states; that Major Generals Gates and Mifflin, members of the Board of War, have leave to attend the said council."—*Journals of Congress*, 18 April, 1777. By a subsequent resolve, the commander of artillery was added to the council. Replies to the circular letter were submitted, and a council of war held on 8 May, 1778. See note to *Washington to McDougall*, 5 May, 1778, *post*.

difficulty and delay. Be assured, the success of the measure is a matter of the most serious moment, and that it ought to be brought to a conclusion as speedily as possible. The spirit of resigning commissions has been long at an alarming height, and increases daily. Applications from officers on furlough are hourly arriving and Genls. Heath at Boston—McDougall on the north River and Mason of Virginia are asking what they are to do with the appliants to them.

The Virginia line has sustained a violent shock in this instance. Not less than ninety have already resigned to me. The same conduct has prevailed among the officers from the other States, though not yet to so considerable a degree; and there are but too just grounds to fear, that it will shake the very existence of the army, unless a remedy is soon, very soon, applied. There is none, in my opinion, so effectual as the one pointed out.[1] This, I trust, will satisfy the officers, and at the same time it will produce no present additional emission of money.

[1] That is, an establishment of half-pay for the officers after the termination of the war. A plan for this purpose had been agreed upon by the committee in camp, and was now under debate in Congress. It was thought extremely important by General Washington, as appears by some of his preceding letters, and he used his utmost endeavors to promote it; but there was a division in Congress. Some of the members were wholly opposed to it, particularly a majority of the members from the Eastern States, as encouraging too far the idea of a standing army; others were of opinion, that Congress had no power to act in the matter, without special instructions from the States; and others were for limiting the time. This variety of opinion caused embarrassment in Congress, and delay in adopting the report of the committee for the new arrangements of the army. For other particulars respecting the subject of half-pay, see Sparks' *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. i., p. 152.

They will not be persuaded to sacrifice all views of present interest, and encounter the numerous vicissitudes of war, in the defence of their country, unless she will be generous enough on her part to make a decent provision for their future support. I do not pronounce absolutely, that we shall have no army if the establishment fails, but the army we may have will be without discipline, without energy, incapable of acting with vigor, and destitute of those cements necessary to promise success on the one hand, or to withstand the shocks of adversity on the other. It is indeed hard to say how extensive the evil may be, if the measure should be rejected, or much longer delayed. I find it a very arduous task to keep the officers in tolerable humor, and to protract such a combination in quitting the service, as might possibly undo us for ever.

The difference between our service and that of the enemy is very striking. With us, from the peculiar, unhappy situation of things, the officer, a few instances excepted, must break in upon his private fortune for present support, without a prospect of future relief. With them, even companies are esteemed so honorable and so valuable, that they have sold of late from fifteen to twenty-two hundred pounds sterling; and I am credibly informed, that four thousand guineas have been given for a troop of dragoons. You will readily determine how this difference will operate; what effects it must produce. Men may speculate as they will; they may talk of patriotism; they may draw a few examples from

ancient story, of great achievements performed by its influence; but whoever builds upon them, as a sufficient basis for conducting a long and bloody war, will find themselves deceived in the end. We must take the passions of men as nature has given them, and those principles as a guide, which are generally the rule of action. I do not mean to exclude altogether the idea of patriotism. I know it exists, and I know it has done much in the present contest. But I will venture to assert, that a great and lasting war can never be supported on this principle alone. It must be aided by a prospect of interest, or some reward. For a time it may, of itself, push men to action, to bear much, to encounter difficulties; but it will not endure unassisted by interest.

The necessity of putting the army upon a respectable footing, both as to numbers and constitution, is now become more essential than ever. The enemy are beginning to play a game more dangerous, than their efforts by arms (though these will not be remitted in the smallest degree), and which threatens a fatal blow to the independence of America, and to her liberties of course. They are endeavoring to ensnare the people by specious allurements of peace. It is not improbable they have had such abundant cause to be tired of the war, that they may be sincere in the terms they offer, which, though far short of our pretensions, will be extremely flattering to minds, that do not penetrate far into political consequences; but, whether they are sincere or not, they may be equally destructive; for, to discerning men nothing

can be more evident, than that a peace on the principles of dependence, however limited, after what has happened, would be to the last degree dishonorable and ruinous.[1] It is however much to be apprehended, that the idea of such an event will have a very powerful effect upon the country, and if not combated with the greatest address will serve, at least, to produce supineness and disunion. Men are naturally fond of peace, and there are symptoms which may authorize an opinion, that the people of America are pretty generally weary of the present war. It is doubtful, whether many of our friends might not incline to an accommodation on the grounds held out, or which may be, rather than persevere in a contest for independence. If this is the case, it must surely be the truest policy to strengthen the army, and place it upon a substantial footing. This will conduce to inspire the country with confidence; enable those at the head of affairs to consult the public

[1] There was at this time in Parliament a small party in favor of granting independence to America, and of instructing the commissioners to make a treaty on that footing. Governor Pownall held out this idea, and enforced it with strong arguments, in the debate on the address to the king, in reply to his message accompanying the declaration of the French ambassador, which gave notice of the treaty between France and the United States. "This treaty," said Governor Pownall, "does not alter my idea of the probability of our having even yet peace with America, if we will but take the way that leads to it, and the only one that is open. Nothing but the perverseness of our own conduct can cross it. We know that the Americans are and must be independent; and yet we will not treat with them as such. If government itself retains the least idea of sovereignty, it has already gone too far for that; if it entertains the least hope of peace, it has not gone far enough; and every step we shall take to put the Americans back from independency, will convince them the more of the necessity of going forward."—*Parliamentary Debates*, March 17th, 1778.—*Sparks*.

honor and interest, notwithstanding the defection of some and temporary inconsistency and irresolution of others, who may desire to compromise the dispute; and, if a treaty should be deemed expedient, will put it in their power to insist upon better terms, than they could otherwise expect.

Besides the most vigorous exertions at home to increase and establish our military force upon a good basis, it appears to me advisable, that we should immediately try the full extent of our interest abroad, and bring our European negotiations to an issue. I think France must have ratified our independence,[1] and will declare war immediately, on finding that serious proposals of accommodation are made; but lest, from a mistaken policy or too exalted an opinion of our power from the representations she has had, she should still remain indecisive, it were to be wished, proper persons were instantly despatched, or our envoys already there instructed to insist pointedly on her coming to a final determination.[2] It cannot

[1] This was true, although the fact was not yet known in America. The treaties of commerce and alliance between France and the United States were signed on the 6th of February. The first meeting between the French minister and the American commissioners, for the purpose of negotiating a treaty, was held at Versailles on the 12th of December. It was stated, in an article of the treaty of alliance, to be its direct end, "to maintain effectually the liberty, sovereignty, and independence, absolute and unlimited, of the United States, as well in matters of government as commerce."—See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. i., pp. 355, 364.

[2] It seems there were some fears at this moment as to the effect which might be produced on the American people by the advances of the British ministry in Lord North's propositions. In a reply to General Washington's circular letter, asking the advice of the general officers respecting a plan of the campaign, the Marquis de Lafayette stated, as reasons for vigorous measures, the expected reinforcements of the enemy, and the approaching arrival of three

be fairly supposed, that she will hesitate a moment to declare war, if she is given to understand, in a proper manner, that a reunion of the two countries may be the consequence of procrastination. A European war and a European alliance would effectually answer our purposes. If the step I now mention should be eligible, despatches ought to be sent at once by different conveyances, for fear of accidents. I confess, it appears to me a measure of this kind could not but be productive of the most salutary consequences. If possible, I should also suppose it absolutely necessary to obtain good intelligence from England, pointing out the true springs of this manœuvre of ministry; the preparations of force they are making; the prospects there are of raising it; the amount, and when it may be expected.

It really seems to me, from a comprehensive view

commissioners, "whom I fear," said he, "more than ten thousand men."—*MS. Letter*, April 25th.

General Washington himself, in a letter to his brother, written a few days after the above, speaks as follows, alluding to the British commissioners. "It will require," he observes, "all the skill, wisdom, and policy of the first abilities of these States to manage the helm, and steer with judgment to the haven of our wishes, through so many shelves and rocks as will be thrown in our way. This, more than ever, is the time for Congress to be filled with the first characters from every State, instead of having a thin assembly, and many States totally unrepresented, as is the case at present. I have often regretted the pernicious, and what appears to me fatal policy of having our ablest men engaged in the formation of the more local governments, and filling offices in their respective States, leaving the great national concern (on which the superstructure of all and every of them absolutely depends, and without which none can exist,) to be managed by men of more contracted abilities. Indeed, those at a distance from the seat of war live in such perfect tranquillity, that they conceive the dispute to be in a manner at an end; and those near it are so disaffected, that they only serve as embarrassments. Between the two, therefore, time slips away without the necessary means for opening the campaign in season or with propriety."

of things, that a period is fast approaching, big with events of the most interesting importance; when the counsels we pursue, and the part we act, may lead decisively to liberty or to slavery. Under this idea, I cannot but regret that inactivity, that inattention, that want of something, which unhappily I have but too often experienced in our public affairs. I wish that our representation in Congress was complete and full from every State, and that it was formed of the first abilities among us. Whether we continue to war or proceed to negotiate, the wisdom of America in council cannot be too great. Our situation will be truly delicate. To enter into a negotiation too hastily, or to reject it altogether, may be attended with consequences equally fatal. The wishes of the people, seldom founded in deep disquisitions, or resulting from other reasonings than their present feelings, may not entirely accord with our true policy and interest. If they do not, to observe a proper line of conduct for promoting the one, and avoiding offence to the other, will be a work of great difficulty.

Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, can possibly do. A peace on other terms would, if I may be allowed the expression, be a peace of war. The injuries we have received from the British nation were so unprovoked, and have been so great and so many, that they can never be forgotten. Besides the feuds, the jealousies, the animosities, that would ever attend a union with them; besides the importance, the advantages, we should derive from an unrestricted commerce; our fidelity as a people, our gratitude,

our character as men, are opposed to a coalition with them as subjects, but in case of the last extremity. Were we easily to accede to terms of dependence, no nation, upon future occasions, let the oppressions of Britain be never so flagrant and unjust, would interpose for our relief; or, at most, they would do it with a cautious reluctance, and upon conditions most probably that would be hard, if not dishonorable to us. France, by her supplies, has saved us from the yoke thus far; and a wise and virtuous perseverance would, and I trust will, free us entirely.

I have sent Congress Lord North's speech, and the two bills offered by him to Parliament. They are spreading fast through the country, and will soon become a subject of general notoriety. I therefore think they had best be published in our papers, and persons of leisure and ability set to work to counteract the impressions they may make on the minds of the people.

Before I conclude, there are one or two points more, upon which I will add an observation or two. The first is, the indecision of Congress and the delay used in coming to determinations on matters referred to them. This is productive of a variety of inconveniences; and an early decision, in many cases, though it should be against the measure submitted, would be attended with less pernicious effects. Some new plan might then be tried; but, while the matter is held in suspense, nothing can be attempted. The other point is, the *jealousy*, which Congress unhappily entertain of the army, and which, if reports are right,

some members labor to establish. You may be assured, there is nothing more injurious, or more unjustly founded. This jealousy stands upon the commonly received opinion, which under proper limitations is certainly true, that standing armies are dangerous to a State, and from forming the same conclusion of the component parts of all, though they are totally dissimilar in their nature. The prejudices in other countries have only gone to them in time of *peace*, and these from their not having in general cases any of the ties, the concerns, or interests of citizens, or any other dependence, than what flowed from their military employ; in short, from their being mercenaries, hirelings. It is our policy to be prejudiced against them in time of *war;* & though they are citizens, having all the ties and interests of citizens, and in most cases property totally unconnected with the military line.

If we would pursue a right system of policy, in my opinion, there should be none of these distinctions. We should all be considered, Congress and army, as one people, embarked in one cause, in one interest; acting on the same principle, and to the same end. The distinction, the jealousies set up, or perhaps only incautiously let out, can answer not a single good purpose. They are impolitic in the extreme. Among individuals the most certain way to make a man your enemy is to tell him you esteem him such. So with public bodies; and the very jealousy, which the narrow politics of some may affect to entertain of the army, in order to a due subordination to the

supreme civil authority, is a likely mean to produce a contrary effect; to incline it to the pursuit of those measures, which they may wish it to avoid. It is unjust, because no order of men in the Thirteen States has paid a more sanctimonious regard to their proceedings than the army; and indeed it may be questioned whether there has been that scrupulous adherence had to them by any other, for without arrogance or the smallest deviation from truth it may be said, that no history now extant can furnish an instance of an army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours has done, and bearing them with the same patience and fortitude. To see men, without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lie on, without shoes, by which their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet, and almost as often without provisions as with them, marching through the frost and snow, and at Christmas taking up their winter-quarters within a day's march of the enemy, without a house or hut to cover them, till they could be built, and submitting to it without a murmur, is a proof of patience and obedience, which in my opinion can scarce be paralleled.

There may have been some remonstrances or applications to Congress, in the style of complaint, from the army, and slaves indeed should we be, if this privilege were denied, on account of their proceedings in particular instances; but these will not authorize nor even excuse a jealousy, that they are therefore aiming at unreasonable powers, or making strides dangerous or subversive of civil authority. Things

should not be viewed in that light, more especially as Congress in some cases have relieved the injuries complained of, & which had flowed from their own acts. I refer you to my letter to yourself and Colo. Lee which accompanies this upon the subject of money for such of the old Virginia troops as have or may reinlist.

In respect to the volunteer plan, I scarce know what opinion to give at this time. The propriety of a requisition on this head will depend altogether on our operations. Such kind of troops should not be called for, but upon the spur of the occasion, and at the moment of executing an enterprise. They will not endure a long service; and, of all men in the military line, they are the most impatient of restraint and necessary government.

As the propositions and the speech of Lord North must be founded in the despair of the nation of succeeding against us; or from a rupture in Europe, that has actually happened, or certainly will happen;[1] or from some deep political manœuvre; or from what

[1] This conjecture was well founded. There is no room to doubt that, when the Conciliatory Bills were brought before Parliament by Lord North, the ministry were convinced a negotiation was pending between the French court and the American commissioners. During the debate (February 17th), and in reply to Lord North's speech, Mr. Fox affirmed, upon information on which reliance might be placed, that a treaty had already been signed; and when the question was pressed by Mr. Grenville upon Lord North, he answered, "that he could not say from authority that the treaty alluded to was signed; that, indeed, it was possible, nay too probable, but not authenticated by the ambassador."—Almon's *Parliamentary Register*, vol. viii., pp. 385, 389. The question how the British were informed of the signing of the treaty before the formal notice of the French minister, led to a serious dispute among the American commissioners at Paris.

I think still more likely, a composition of the whole, would it not be good policy, in this day of uncertainty and distress to the Tories, to avail ourselves of the occasion, and for the several States to hold out pardon &c. to all delinquents returning by a certain day?[1] They are frightened, and this is the time to operate upon them. Upon a short consideration of the matter, it appears to me, that such a measure would detach the Tories from the enemy, and bring things to a much speedier conclusion, and of course be a mean of saving much public treasure.

I will now be done and I trust that you excuse, not only the length of my letter, but the freedom with which I have delivered my sentiments in the course of it upon several occasions. The subjects struck me as important and interesting, and I have only to wish, that they may appear to you in the same light.

I am, dear Sir, with great regard, &c.[2]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL McDOUGALL.

HEADQUARTERS, VALLEY FORGE,
22 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I am perfectly satisfied with your delay of the enterprise proposed by you, as I am certain it has been

[1] This measure was adopted by Congress two days after the above letter was written.—*Journals*, April 23d.

[2] "With respect to your future treatment of the Tories, the most effectual way of putting a stop to their traitorous practices will be shooting some of the most notorious offenders wherever they can be found *in flagrante delicto*. This summary punishment inflicted on a few traitors will probably strike terror into others and deter them from exposing themselves to a similar fate."—*Washington to Joseph Kirkbride, Lieutenant of the County of Bucks*, 20 April, 1778.

founded upon substantial reasons. Congress having, by their resolve of the 15th instant, directed General Gates to resume the command of the northern department, and to repair forthwith to Fishkill for that purpose, I imagine he will proceed immediately thither. Upon his arrival there, I must desire you to return to this army and take the command of your division.[1] As Colonel La Radière and Colonel Kosciuszko will never agree, I think it will be best to order La Radière to return, especially as you say Kosciuszko is better adapted to the genius and temper of the people.

It is painful to reflect upon the number of valuable officers, who have been obliged to quit the service on account of the disproportion between their pay and every necessary of life. I do not yet know what Congress will determine, as to the new arrangement and provision for the army; but if the gentlemen mentioned by you are such as will be an acquisition to the service, I would wish you to endeavor to persuade them to remain until they see what Congress will do. If they cannot be prevailed upon to wait till that time, you will see that they are not indebted

[1] On being re-appointed to this command, General Gates was invested with extensive powers for completing the works on the North River, and was "authorized to carry on operations against the enemy if any favorable opportunity should offer." For effecting these purposes, he could call for the artificers and militia of the State of New York and the Eastern States. It was enjoined upon him, however, in his instructions, "not to undertake any expedition against New York, without previously consulting the Commander-in-chief." The instructions were drawn up by a committee of Congress, of which Gouveuneur Morris was chairman; and caution seems to have been used to guard against a revival of the difficulties which had recently threatened the peace of the army, if not the safety of the country.

to their regiments or to the public, and give them discharges. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL CHARLES LEE.

VALLEY FORGE, 22 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Boudinot, at Commissary Loring's request, met him at Germantown yesterday; from whence he is just returned, after having agreed on a final exchange of yourself and other officers, with that gentleman. That delay may not produce danger, I shall send in a flag to-morrow for your parole; when obtained, I shall most cordially and sincerely congratulate you on your restoration to your country and to the army. I could not however refrain, till the happy event should take place, rejoicing with you on the probability of it, nor from expressing my wish of seeing you in camp, as soon as you can possibly make it convenient to yourself, after you are perfectly at liberty to take an active part with us; of which I shall not delay giving you the earliest notice. I have received your favor of the 13th instant from Yorktown. The contents shall be the subject of conversation, when I have the pleasure of seeing you in circumstances to mount your hobby-horse, which, I hope, will not on trial be found quite so limping a jade, as the one you set out to York on. I am, &c.[1]

[1] General Lee had written: "I have reason to hope, that Congress will unembarrass the negotiation of the commissioners, with respect to a general exchange of prisoners, of all matters which I myself think foreign to the purpose, and that I shall soon be at liberty to take an active part; but I could wish that

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 23 April, 1778.

SIR,

I take the liberty to transmit to you a letter, which I received yesterday from Governor Tryon, enclosing the drafts of the two bills I forwarded before, with his certificate of the manner in which they came to his hands, accompanied by his more extraordinary and impertinent request, that, through my means, the contents should be communicated to the officers and men of this army. This engine of the ministry, from Governor Livingston's account, is very industriously circulating copies of these drafts, in obedience to their and his royal master's mandates. The letter which I enclose, and a triplicate, came to hand at one time; some future conveyance, it is probable, will present me the duplicate.[1]

they would be a little more expeditious. I perhaps ought to make an apology to you for a liberty I have taken; but if it is regarded in a proper point of view I am in hopes it can neither be considered a step of indelicacy towards you, nor by General Howe as any violation of the parole I have given.

"You must know, that it has long been the object of my studies how to form an army in the most simple manner possible. I once wrote a treatise, though I did not publish it, for the use of the militia of England. By reading Machiavel's *Institutions*, and Marshal Saxe, I have taken it into my head, that I understand it better than almost any man living. In short, I am mounting on a hobby-horse of my own training, and it runs away with me. Indeed I am so infatuated with it, that I cannot forbear boasting its excellences on all occasions to friends and enemies. You must excuse me, therefore, if I could not forbear recommending the beast to some members of Congress."—*MS. Letter*, April 13th.

[1] "Having been honored with his Majesty's instructions to circulate the inclosures, I take the liberty to offer them to you, for your candid consideration, and to recommend that through your means, the officers and men under your command may be acquainted with their contents."—*William Tryon to Washington*, 17 April, 1778.

"Your letter of the 17th, and a triplicate of the same, were duly received. I had had the pleasure of seeing the drafts of the two bills, before those which

I would also take the liberty to enclose to you the "Evening Post," No. 475, which Governor Livingston was so obliging as to send me yesterday. Were we not fully satisfied, from our experience, that there are no artifices, no measures too black or wicked for the enemy or their adherents to attempt, in order to promote their views, we might be astonished at the daring confidence, in defiance of the opinion of the world, manifested in a publication of this paper, purporting a resolution of Congress, of the 20th of February. This proceeding is infamous to the last degree, and calculated to produce the most baneful consequences by exciting an opposition in the people to our drafting system, and embarrassing at least the only probable mode now left us for raising men. I think it of great importance, that the forgery should

were sent by you came to hand; and I can assure you they were suffered to have a free currency among the officers and men under my command, in whose fidelity to the United States I have the most perfect confidence. The enclosed Gazette, published the 24th at Yorktown, will show you, that it is the wish of Congress, that they should have an unrestrained circulation.

"I take the liberty to transmit to you a few printed copies of a resolution of Congress of the 23d instant, and to request you will be instrumental in communicating its contents, so far as it may be in your power, to the persons who are the objects of its operation. The benevolent purpose it is intended to answer will, I persuade myself, sufficiently recommend it to your candor. — *Washington to Major-General William Tryon*, 26 April, 1778.

This was a fair retort upon Governor Tryon, who had sent to General Washington copies of the Conciliatory Bills, with a request that he would circulate them. The resolve, enclosed in the above letter, recommended to the legislatures of the several States, or to the executive authority of each State possessing the power, to issue proclamations offering pardon, under certain specified limitations and restrictions, "to such of their inhabitants or subjects as had levied war against any of the States, or adhered to, aided, or abetted the enemy, and who should surrender themselves to any civil or military officer in any of the States, and return to the State in which they belong before the 10th of June." This resolve was suggested by a hint in General Washington's letter of the 21st of April to Mr. Banister.

be announced in the most public manner, and am the more induced to this opinion from Governor Livingston's account of the disagreeable operation it has had, and is still likely to produce, if not contradicted. If it is, and with a few strictures, I should hope that it will excite in the breasts of all our countrymen a just and generous contempt of the enemy for such a dirty, wicked proceeding.

I was last night honored with your favor of the 18th instant, with the proceedings alluded to. A general plan of operations for the compaign is indispensably essential to be settled. I have thought much upon the subject; and some propositions respecting it were put in the hands of all the general officers here on Tuesday evening for their consideration. I also intended to send a messenger this day to meet General Gates, supposing him to be on his way to Hudson's River, and to request his call at this camp, that we might enter into a full and free discussion of the point. There is not a moment to be delayed in forming some general system, in my opinion; and I only wait the arrival of Generals Gates and Mifflin to summon a council for the purpose. I have the honor to be, &c.

P.S.—It is confidently reported, and I have little doubt of the truth of it, that Sir William Howe is recalled, and that General Clinton is to succeed him in the command.[1] I have also the pleasure to trans-

[1] Lord George Germaine's letter to General Howe, signifying his Majesty's acquiescence in his request to be relieved from the command, was dated February 4th. He was directed at the same time to deliver up his orders and

mit a list of sundry officers exchanged on the 21st instant.[1]

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, IN CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 25 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I received your obliging favor of the 18th instant yesterday evening. I thank you much for the explanatory hints it contains, and could have wished it had come to hand a little sooner. I have many things to say to you, but as the express, who will deliver you this, is going with despatches, that will not admit of delay, I shall content myself with taking notice of one matter, that appears to me to require immediate remedy.[2]

The resolution of Congress directs the council to be formed of major-generals and the chief engineer, who, you say, is to be a member *officially*. By this the commanding officer of artillery is negatively

instructions to Sir Henry Clinton as his succeesor. The letter was received by Sir William Howe on the 9th of April.

[1] Read in Congress, April 25th. Referred to Drayton, Morris, and Dana.

[2] *From Gouverneur Morris' Letter.*—"We have determined to send Gates to Hudson's River, where he is to command very largely. But he is to receive instructions, which shall be proper. You are directed to call a council of *major-generals*, in which the chief engineer is *officially* to be a member, and to which, by a subsequent resolution, Generals Gates and Mifflin were *ordered* to repair. As these gentlemen ought not to receive orders *immediately* from Congress, they are, as you will see, permitted to leave the Board of War upon *your* order. This *amendment* was therefore acquiesced in unanimously.

"Apropos, of your council of war. Should you determine on any thing, which, considering the course of human affairs, is, I confess, rather improbable, let Congress know nothing about it. A secret should never be trusted to many bosoms. I will forfeit any thing, except reputation, that it will not be well kept, even by those necessarily confided in."—April 18th. See the whole letter in Sparks' *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. i., p. 164.

excluded, who, by the practice of armies, and from the very nature of his appointment, is more *officially* a member than the other. According to my ideas, both or neither ought to be there; or, if an official preference is due to one more than the other, it is to the commander in the artillery line. I do not know what motives induced the discrimination in this instance; but I should suppose it will at least be felt; and I will further add, though prejudices may be entertained by some against General Knox, there is no department in the army, that has been conducted with greater propriety, or to more advantage, than the one in which he presides, and owing principally if not wholly to his management. Surely whatever plans may be come into, the artillery will have no small share in the execution.

You say, *All will yet be well.* I wish it heartily; but am much mistaken, if there are not some secret and retrograde springs in motion to disprove it. I wish you could announce the provision for officers concluded. It seems to me the basis of all our operations. Resignation after resignation is taking place; not here only, but of officers acting east of Hudson's River.

I am, with great esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] Mr. Morris wrote in reply: "Knox will attend the Council. Conway has resigned, and his resignation has been accepted. The affairs of the army are necessarily delayed by the foreign affairs, which have broken in upon us. As to the half-pay, matters stand thus. The questions have been carried; but by an entry on the minutes there is an agreement, that a final question shall be put, whether it be finally determined in Congress, or sent to the several States. When a motion is made for the purpose, the yeas will be Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Jersey, and South Carolina; the nays will be New York,

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 25 April, 1778.

SIR,

I beg leave to inform Congress, that the report of the commissioners coming, according to intelligence received yesterday by a person of Philadelphia, is confidently believed; and it is there thought, that they will very soon arrive.[1] I think it almost certain that the matter will not be delayed, as the conduct of the ministry, in not sending them immediately after their former propositions, has been much reprobated, and as it may be of much importance to improve the first impressions of the people upon the occasion. Lord Amherst, Admiral Keppel, and General Murray, are said to be the persons appointed[2]; and it is likely they are vested with both civil and military powers. The information was through the channel of a sensible, intelligent man, well known, and of esteemed credit. He is connected with the British army, having two or three brothers in it. I shall transmit the earliest accounts I receive from time to time on this very interesting subject. I have the honor to be, &c.[3]

Maryland, Virginia, and Georgia. Pennsylvania is in a mighty flimsy situation on that subject, having indeed a mighty flimsy representation. I wish Boudinot were here. Delaware is absent, who is with us; as is North Carolina, also absent. New Hampshire is absent, who is against us."—*MS. Letter*, May 1st.

When the question was put, two weeks afterwards, whether the subject of making allowance to the officers after the war should be referred to the several States, it was decided in the negative, by a vote which accorded exactly with Mr. Morris' prediction.—*Journals*, May 13th.

[1] Commissioners for effecting a reconciliation with the Americans, according to the tenor of Lord North's bills for that purpose.

[2] This information, in regard to the names of the commissioners, proved to be erroneous.

[3] Read in Congress, April 26th. The expectations of the British ministry,

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

VALLEY FORGE, 26 April, 1778.

SIR,

I received yesterday your favor of the 15th instant with the papers alluded to.

Your reasoning, upon the subject of deserters attending flags, is certainly right, and not to be disputed. Their appearing in that character is an additional crime, and it is the practice of war, in such instances, founded in principles of common reason and the delicacy of truces, to execute them immediately. This is the custom in general cases. How far the circumstances, which attended the enlistment of Job Hetfield, require a discrimination in his favor,

in regard to what they called the Conciliatory Propositions, may be inferred from Lord George Germaine's letter on the subject to Sir Henry Clinton, in which he says:

"If that be true, which has been repeatedly declared by the colonial assemblies, and is still asserted by many persons, who pretend to be well informed of the dispositions of the inhabitants, that the generality of the people desire nothing more, than a full security for the enjoyment of all their rights and liberties under the British constitution, there can be no room to doubt, that the generous terms now held out to them will be gladly embraced, and that a negotiation will immediately take place upon the arrival of the new commission, and be so far advanced before the season will admit of military operations, as to supersede the necessity of another campaign. So speedy and happy a termination of the war could not fail to gratify the King, as the peace, prosperity, and happiness of all his subjects have ever been his most ardent wish."—*MS. Letter*, Whitehall, March 8th.

Instructions were at the same time communicated, that, in case the attempt at a reconciliation did not succeed, the war was to be prosecuted with vigor, and a plan for the campaign was suggested. Five days after the above letter was written, the French ambassador made known to the British cabinet, that a treaty had been signed between the French government and the commissioners from the United States. The instructions to Sir Henry Clinton were then essentially altered. These facts render it probable, that the British ministers had not positive knowledge of the signature of the treaty, before it was communicated by the French ambassador, although they undoubtedly had strong reasons for suspecting it.—*Sparks*.

is a point perhaps of some difficulty. I find, by inquiry of General Maxwell, that he was enlisted and sworn; but that there was a sort of coercion, which might distinguish it from an act perfectly free and voluntary. Upon the whole, I think his detention and confinement justifiable, which I would prefer to capital punishment. At the same time, you will permit me to observe, that, from the expediency of flags, and the necessity of such an intercourse between warring powers, it is the constant usage for the party detaining, executing, &c., to inform the other side of the reasons.

I have taken the freedom to commit to your care a letter for Major-General Tryon, which you will be pleased to send by a flag to Staten Island, or to such other post as you may deem most proper. I transmit you a copy of our correspondence, which on his part is pretty similar, it is probable, to his addresses to your officers. Determined that I should get some of his obliging letters, he made out a first, a second, and a third, all of the same tenor and date. I am persuaded you will be under some difficulty, which to admire most, his impertinence or his folly.

I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] "The practice of seizing and confining the friends to America in the civil line, however barbarous it may be, is a favorable engine of policy with the enemy; from which I believe it will not be easy to make them depart. Their object is to deter men from taking an active and leading part in our governments, the firm establishment of which they foresee will be fatal to their views. Whether the measure of securing their friends with us, to redeem ours in their power, would put a stop to the practice, is extremely doubtful. There are few persons among us whom they esteem of sufficient importance to desist on their account from anything which they look upon as advancive of their interest." —*Washington to Samuel Chase*, 27 April, 1778.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

VALLEY FORGE, 27 April, 1778.

SIR,

I had the honor yesterday afternoon to receive your letter of the 24th, continued to the 25th, with its important enclosures. Congress will be pleased to accept my sincere thanks for the fresh instance of confidence manifested in their resolution of the 23d, and other proceedings; and they may rest assured, that whatever powers are trusted to me shall be invariably directed to promote the interests of these States. If in any case there should be a misapplication or a failure in the execution, it will be the effect of mistake and not of design. I shall take measures for distributing the report of the committee on Lord North's bills, and the resolution of the 23d, inviting delinquents to return to their allegiance and to the protection of these States.[1] This proceeding appears to me founded in great good policy; and I should hope, that it will be attended with many valuable consequences; but this can only be proved by the event.

[1] The draft of the Conciliatory Bills, communicated to Congress in General Washington's letter of the 18th, was referred to a committee of three, consisting of Gouverneur Morris, Drayton, and Dana. The bills were regarded as genuine by the committee, analyzed, examined in their various parts, and censured throughout as totally inadequate to the expectations of the Americans, and as affording no solid basis for a reconciliation. The report, expressing these sentiments, was discussed by Congress, and *unanimously* adopted. It contains the declaration, "that these United States cannot with propriety hold any conference or treaty with any commissioner, on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else in positive and express terms acknowledge the independence of the said States." The report was drawn up by Gouverneur Morris.—*Journals*, April 22d.

Though I wish most heartily for the aid of General Lee in council and upon every other occasion, yet, as the time of his return is uncertain, or at least it will be several days before it takes place, and as it seems to me, that there is not a moment to lose in forming some general system for our operations, I should think it inexpedient for General Gates to delay coming to camp till his arrival.[1] After a plan is digested, there will be a great deal of time expended before things will be in a proper train for execution. The season is fast advancing and the period, which may be most favorable for any designs we may form, will presently arrive.

I take the liberty to transmit an Extract of a Letter from Genl. Heath, which will shew Congress, that he is pressed on all sides for money. Governor Livingston too is apprehensive, he will be under embarrassments on account of the purchase of Horses, in consequence of the recommendation of the Committee. Their Letter to him, by some means, has been mislaid in the Assembly, and he does not know exactly, the mode prescribed for the payment. I cannot inform him myself, or do what perhaps is more necessary, furnish him with money, and there-

[1] "It being indispensably necessary, that some general plan of operation should be settled for the present campaign, and perceiving that Congress have been pleased to appoint you to command on the North River, I am to request you, if you should not find it too inconvenient, that you will make a digression from your route thither, and favor me with a call at this camp, that we may enter upon a discussion of the point, and form some general system. The propriety of this measure, particularly at this advanced period, will be so obvious to you, that it is unnecessary to add upon the subject."— *Washington to Major-General Gates*, 24 April, 1778. A similar invitation was sent to Mifflin.

fore hope that Congress or the Committee will. I have written Major-General Tryon a few lines in answer to his letter, a copy of which is enclosed. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

VALLEY FORGE, 29 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your two favors of the 6th & 13th instant have been duly received.

I am glad to hear that General Burgoyne is gone, and I wish his departure had been much earlier. At the time of his capture, he certainly must have entertained very favorable impressions of our force, and perhaps in point of good policy he should have been allowed to depart, before they were in the smallest degree done away, and before he could have obtained any accurate ideas of our affairs. He must yet, in vindication of his conduct, speak largely of our powers. * * *

It is astonishing that officers will, in direct violation of the resolution of Congress, my recruiting instructions, and the most evident principles of policy, founded in experience, persevere in enlisting deserters from the British army. Supposing it might be done in any case, yet there is every possible objection to the measure in the instance of deserters from General Burgoyne's army. These troops did not originally come into our hands through choice; they were

[1] Read in Congress, April 29th.

conquered, brought to our possession by compulsion. Those apprehensive of punishment, in case of return, which may operate on the minds of *deserters*, they feel nothing of. So far from the most distant chance of punishment, they will be applauded by the commander of the British army for their fidelity and attachment to their prince, and their enlisting with us will be considered as a high stroke of policy, and the only probable mode they could adopt to effect their escape. We are counting on men, who cannot be confided in, and who will embrace the earliest opportunity to leave us and strengthen the enemy, at the expense of arms, clothes, and bounty on our part.[1]

But very few if any of those, who deserted from General Burgoyne, and who came on with the two detachments under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, now remain with him; they are gone. In like manner, a detachment from Colonel Henley,[2] which marched from Boston sixty strong, arrived here two or three days ago with thirteen men only; and, had it not been for a detachment of New Hampshire troops, it

[1] "I am exceedingly concerned to learn that you are acting contrarily both to a positive resolve of Congress and very express orders, in engaging British prisoners for your Legionary Corps. When Congress referred you to me on the subject of its composition, to facilitate your raising it, I gave you leave to enlist one third deserters in the foot, and was induced to do even that from your assuring me that your intention was principally to take Germans, in whom you thought a greater confidence might be placed. The British prisoners will cheerfully enlist as a ready means of escaping, the continental bounty will be lost, and your corps as far as ever from being complete. I desire therefore that the prisoners may be returned to their confinement, and that you will for the future adhere to the restrictions under which I laid you. The horse are to be without exception natives who have ties of property and family connections."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Pulaski*, 1 May, 1778.

[2] David Henley.

is highly probable, one of them would not have been seen. Thirty of the sixty are now in Easton jail, having formed a plan at that place to go off in a body. The rest, except thirteen, had escaped before. If we would wish to reinforce the enemy with the whole of Mr. Burgoyne's army, we cannot pursue a mode, that will be more effectual or more certain, than to enlist it into our service; but it may be done with less injury by sending them the men, unarmed, without paying them an exorbitant bounty. If nothing else will restrain officers from pursuing such a pernicious, ruinous practice, they must be made to pay for all expenses and losses occasioned by it. Indeed there is nothing that can compensate for the injury. * * *

I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 30 April, 1778.

SIR,

The extensive ill consequences, arising from a want of uniformity in discipline and manœuvres throughout the army, have long occasioned me to wish for the establishment of a well organized inspectorship; and the concurrence of Congress in the same views has induced me to set on foot a temporary institution, which, from the success that has hitherto attended it, gives me the most flattering expectations, and will, I hope, obtain their approbation.

Baron de Steuben's length of service in the first military school in Europe, and his former rank,

pointed him out as a person peculiarly qualified to be at the head of this department. This appeared the least exceptionable way of introducing him into the army, and one that would give him the most ready opportunity of displaying his talents. I therefore proposed to him to undertake the office of inspector-general, which he agreed to with the greatest cheerfulness, and has performed the duties of it with a zeal and intelligence equal to our wishes. He has two ranks of inspectors under him; the lowest are officers charged with the inspection of brigades, with the title of brigade-inspectors; the others superintend several of these. They have written instructions relative to their several functions; and the manœuvres, which they are to practise, are illustrated by a company, which the Baron has taken the pains to train himself.[1]

[1] "I have had several long conversations with the Baron Steuben, who appears to me a man profound in the science of war, and well disposed to render his best services to the United States. In an interview between him and the general, at which I assisted in quality of interpreter, he declared that he had purposely waved making any contract with Congress, previous to his having made some acquaintance with the Commander in chief, in order that he might avoid giving offence to the officers of the army, and that the general might decide in what post he could be the most useful. If I have conceived rightly of his character and abilities, he would make us an excellent quarter master general, in the military part of the department; his office being confined to the choice of positions, regulation of marches, etc. But as the civil and military duties with us are blended, he can't be disposed of in this way; his being a foreigner, unfitting him totally for the latter. I think he would be the properest man we could choose for the office of inspector general, and there are several good assistants that might be given him. I have the highest opinion of the service he would render in this line, as he seems to be perfectly aware of the disadvantages under which our army has labored from short enlistments and frequent changes; seems to understand what our subjects are capable of, and is not so staunch a systematist as to be averse from adapting established forms to stubborn circumstances. He will not give us the perfect instructions,

The brigade-inspectors were chosen by the brigadier and commanding officers of regiments in each brigade. The inspectors are Lieutenant-Colonels Barber[1] of Jersey, Brooks[2] of Massachusetts, Davis[3] of Virginia, and Monsieur Ternant, a French gentleman. The reason for employing him, apart [from] his intrinsic merit and abilities, was his possessing the French and English languages equally, which made him a necessary assistant to Baron de Steuben. He is content to serve without rank, until, after an experiment of his abilities, Congress shall determine what he is entitled to.

Upon the arrival of Lieutenant-Colonel Fleury in

absolutely speaking, but the best which we are in a condition to receive. We want some kind of general tutoring in this way so much, that as obnoxious as Conway is to most of the army, rather than take the field without the advantages that might be derived from a judicious exercise of his office, I would wish every motive of dissatisfaction respecting him for the present to be suppressed. The Baron proposes to take the rank of major general, with the pay, rations, &c. He does not wish for any actual command, as he is not acquainted with our language and the genius of our people."—*John Laurens to his Father*, 28 February, 1778.

"The Baron Steuben has had the fortune to please uncommonly, for a stranger, at first sight. All the general officers who have seen him, are prepossessed in his favor, and conceive highly of his abilities. . . . As far as my line can reach, I conceive the baron to be profound in the military science. The General seems to have a very good opinion of him, and thinks he might be usefully employed in the office of inspector general, but I fancy is cautious of recommending it to Congress, as he might appear implacably to pursue another person to whom Congress gave that post. Now it is a doubt with me whether the gentleman in question was not virtually removed from the inspectorship by being ordered on the Canadian expedition. In that case, the difficulty would be obviated. The baron's own desire is to have for the present the rank and pay of a major general, not to have any actual command, until he is better known, and shall be better qualified by a knowledge of our language and the genius and manners of the people. Then, if any stroke is to be struck, his ambition prompts him to solicit a command."—*John Laurens to his Father*, 9 March, 1778. [1] Francis Barber. [2] John Brooks. [3] William Davis.

camp, as he was unemployed, and had exercised the office of aid-major in France, the Baron proposed to have him employed as an inspector; in which I readily acquiesced, as Congress had given him the rank and pay of lieutenant-colonel. There may be other foreign officers in Continental pay, idle for want of being attached to some corps, of whose services we might avail ourselves in this way, which is the only method of disposing of them, unless they could be formed into a distinct corps. From the extraordinary fatigue and close attention required of the officers employed in the inspectorship, I did not think it amiss to let them entertain hopes, that Congress would allow some addition to the pay, which they derive from their rank, and I take the liberty of recommending the measure. I would propose twenty dollars per month for the brigade-inspectors, and thirty for the inspectors, in addition to their pay in the line.

I should do injustice if I were to be longer silent with regard to the merits of the Baron de Steuben. His knowledge of his profession, added to the zeal which he has discovered since he began upon the functions of his office, leads me to consider him as an acquisition to the service, and to recommend him to the attention of Congress. His expectations with regard to rank extend to that of major-general. His finances, he ingenuously confesses, will not admit of his serving without the incident emoluments; and Congress, I presume, from his character, and their own knowledge of him, will without difficulty gratify him in these particulars.

The Baron is sensible, that our situation requires a few variations in the duties of his office from the general practice in Europe, and particularly that they must necessarily be more comprehensive; in which, as well as in his instructions, he has skilfully yielded to circumstances. The success, which has hitherto attended the plan, enables me to request with confidence the ratification of Congress, and is I think a pledge of the establishment of a well combined general system, which insurmountable obstacles have hitherto opposed. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO HENRY LAURENS.

VALLEY FORGE, 30 April, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you much for your obliging favor of the 27th. I think with you, that a most important crisis is now at hand, and that there cannot be too much wisdom in all our counsels for conducting our affairs

[1] "I had received the resolution of Congress of the 23d. extending my former powers. From your representation of the character of John Derrick, he seems a proper object to make an example of. You will be pleased to transmit me the proceedings of the court martial against him, that I may determine upon them. This I do not desire from the smallest doubt of the most conscientious rectitude and propriety of conduct on your part, being satisfied that this will be the case, but from an idea, and on reconsideration of the matter, that the powers delegated to me by Congress are of a personal nature, and should according to common usage in similar cases, at least in instances where life is concerned, be exercised and carried into execution by a personal decree. You are not to infer from hence that you are not to order court martials for the trial of offenders in the predicament of John Derrick &c, who have or may violate the resolutions you mention; but only that the proceedings in such cases, where capital punishments are denounced, must be sent to me for approbation or disapprobation."—*Washington to General Smallwood*, 30 April, 1778.

to a safe and happy issue. There should, in my opinion, be a full representation of the States in Congress, which I have often regretted has not been the case for a long time past. I also concur with you in sentiment, that gentlemen any where, whose abilities might be of essential service, in case of treaty with the British commissioners, ought to be called forth for the purpose. It will be a work of infinite importance, and the result may lead to happiness or to misery, to freedom or to slavery. The enemy are determined to try us by force and by fraud; and while they are exerting their utmost powers in the first instance, I do not doubt but they will employ men in the second, versed in the arts of dissimulation, of temporizing negotiating geniuses. It appears to me, that nothing short of independence can possibly do. The injuries we have received from Britain can never be forgotten, and a peace upon other terms would be the source of perpetual feuds and animosity. Besides, should Britain, from her love of tyranny and lawless domination, attempt again to bend our necks to the yoke of slavery, and there is no doubt but she would, for her pride and ambition are unconquerable, no nation would credit our professions, nor grant us aid. At any rate, their favors would be obtained upon the most disadvantageous and dishonorable terms.

I sincerely wish the provision for officers, so long the subject of discussion, was established. It is certainly equitable, and in my opinion essential. Day after day and hour after hour produce resignations.

If they were confined to bad officers, or to those of little or no character, they would be of no consequence. But it is painful to see men, who are of a different cast, who have rendered great services to their country, and who are still and may be most materially wanted, leaving the army, on account of the distresses of their families, and to repair their circumstances, which have been much injured by their zeal and the part they have taken in the defence of common rights. The provision, if adopted, would not produce present relief, nor a present expense; yet it would be a compensation in future for their misfortunes and their toils, and be some support to their injured constitutions.

I will be done after observing, if the measure is to be submitted to the legislatures of the several States for their concurrence, the delay, supposing it should be assented to, will I fear be attended with effects, that will only be regretted when too late. But the chance in such case will be rather against the adoption; for there are but few of the legislatures, who are impressed with the real state of things, or who can without difficulty be fully informed of them; and while this matter is held in suspense, every thing is at a stand, and the most fatal consequences may result from it. I do not to this hour know whether, (putting half-pay out of the question,) the old or new establishment is to take place; how to dispose of the officers in consequence; whether the instituting several other corps, as agreed to by the committee and referred by them to Congress, is adopted or not. In

a word, I have no ground to form a single arrangement upon, nor do I know whether the augmentation of the cavalry is to take place or was rejected, in order that I may govern myself thereby. Equally unable am I to answer the incessant applications of the officers of the Pennsylvania and Additional Battalions, who, knowing the intended reduction of some of these corps, are held in suspense, uncertain what part to act. In short, our present situation (now the first of May) is beyond description irksome and dangerous. But I will trouble you no further, than to assure you, that I am, dear Sir, &c.

END OF VOL. VI.